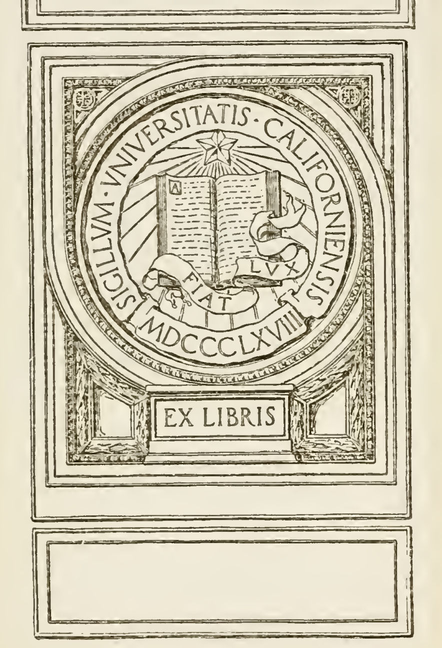
SECRET SECTS OF SYRIA AND THE LEBANON

BERNARD H. SPRINGETT


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SECRET SECTS OF SYRIA AND THE LEBANON



SECRET SECTS OF SYRIA AND THE LEBANON · A CONSIDERATION OF THEIR ORIGIN, CREEDS AND RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, AND THEIR CONNECTION WITH AND INFLUENCE UPON MODERN FREEMASONRY

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INTRODUCTION

A SURPRISING amount of scorn and ridicule has been the reception accorded by Freemasons, both in Great Britain and in America, to previous attempts to place on record some very plain proofs that we are justified in saying in our Masonic Ritual that " we came from the East and proceeded to the West." The plain fact that much of what we now look upon almost entirely as Freemasonry has been practised as part and parcel of the religions of the Middle East for many thousands of years, lies open for anyone who cares to stop and read, instead of running by. But it is frequently and scornfully rejected by the average Masonic student, and this seems to betoken an unwillingness to credit Masonry with an existence of more than two or three hundred years at most. It is painful to those who, like myself, take a justifiable pride in the antiquity of Masonry, far exceeding that of any other religion in the world known to mankind, to hear it so frequently condemned as completely legendary.

In the following pages I have attempted to bring together, from a very large number of sources, reliable evidence as to the prevalence amongst the inhabitants, ancient and modern, of Syria in general and the mountains of the Lebanon in particular, of various ceremonial rites, manners and customs. These, with the accompanying initiations, signs, pass-words and grips, together with the allegorical and symbolical language employed, seem to me to point to an extremely remote origin, and I hope some of my readers, at least, may be equally convinced. So far, as some writers would like us to believe, from the Templars who took part in the Crusades leaving behind them among the Arabian and Syrian tribes they came in contact with some traces of Masonry, we can see, plainly enough, that they, on the contrary, found their

own Masonic knowledge strengthened considerably by what they came in touch with in the East. Thus, on their return to their native land, a natural result would be some development of the extremely ancient ritual of the Druids, remnants of that Stellar Cult which seems to be the true source of Freemasonry, which extended by the influencing visits of Phœnician merchants, had been carefully preserved and added to by the loving care of Alfred and Athelstan, as proved by reliable documents in the Bodleian Library and the British Museum.

Still further revised and modernized, altered in certain attributes of the symbolism, altered, very materially of course, in language, Freemasonry in its present form has preserved for us unchanged, as being unchangeable, the Ancient Landmarks, for some of which Enoch might even have been responsible, as claimed by our traditions.

The late Mr. A. L. Rawson, the American artist who illustrated several books on classical mythology for J. W. Bouton, the New York publisher of *Isis Unveiled,* wrote for Madam Blavatsky a long description, which will be found further on in this present work, of his initiation into the Druse sect, which gave me my first incentive to research into Syrian Masonry. Mr. Rawson was very enthusiastic indeed on the resemblances he found in the Druse system with that of Freemasonry, but his views met with such ridicule among American Masons that he considered it would be a thankless and hopeless task to publish anything further on the subject with a view to educating them. The Rev. Haskett Smith, when reading a similarly interesting and carefully prepared paper before the learned "Ars Quatuor Coronatorum" met with equal coldness. It will be seen from the note on the subject in the Appendix that while only one learned Brother could praise the author, and he *only* because he had introduced a fresh line of research, several were prompt enough to ridicule his propositions! Lyde, Taylor, and Von Hammer, in the innumerable traces their very interesting works have supplied me with of a connection between Syrian religions and Masonry, have themselves only found therein occasions for pouring contempt on the practices of Freemasonry, as imitating the *debasing customs*

of the Syrian tribes—as it appeared to their non-Masonic souls that all initiatory customs were only a prelude to debauchery and excess. How much more we might have gathered with regard to the subject of our inquiry, the prevalence of Masonic rites amongst these tribes, had these learned authors been themselves Freemasons! Nor have later writers on Masonry developed this connection with Syria as they might have been expected to do. Yarker has given only certain references where one might have expected him to go thoroughly into the subject. Waite, the great writer on mystic Masonry, with probably the profoundest knowledge of ritual and tradition possessed by anyone, would seem to have carefully avoided any endeavour to confirm traditions, but rather to have discussed resemblances, and explained symbolisms, on a groundwork of mediæval institution. Dr. Oliver refers to traditions as if he believed in them, and took them as having, at least, a vestige of foundation in fact. But most modern Masonic authors treat him as visionary. Churchward went at length, in his *Arcana of Freemasonry*, into the undoubted antiquity of the signs, tokens and words used in modern Masonry, and traced back their connection through all the ages with the Stellar Cult of antediluvian times. But one may well ask: "Who has believed his report?" On the contrary, the average Freemason, at any rate in this country, seems quite willing to be told that all the ancient allusions in our rituals are purely traditional, have no actual foundation in fact or history, and are all due to the imagination of those who compiled our present rituals and constitutions, somewhere in the eighteenth century.

Take, for instance, the Rosicrucians. One would have thought that either Waite or Wynn Westcott, while clearly showing the influence of the Arabian alchemists on the writings and researches of European disciples, would have associated the establishment by Christian Rosen-Kreutz of a "House of the Holy Spirit," on his return from his sojourn in the East, as a very natural result of his becoming acquainted, while passing through Egypt (the only available route for him from Damascus to Fez), with the "House of Wisdom" at Cairo. There can be little doubt in the minds of those

who study intelligently the Rosicrucian rituals, and reflect thereon, that the close connection between Freemasonry and Alchemy which they find revealed is due to the teaching he received, during his Eastern wanderings, from Arabian Freemasons, still holding to their Masonic tenets, even if the "House" itself had been ruthlessly destroyed some hundred years earlier.

I am dealing with this question more fully in a subsequent chapter, as I am convinced that herein we find a very strong corroboration of my contentions that to Asia in general and to Syria in particular, we must look for the source of Masonic tradition and ritual.

It is a vast subject, and has involved research in the works of a large number of writers, as will be seen from the Bibliography I include in the present volume. It has been necessary, as a background, to survey the ancient Magian schools, an inheritance from the earliest prehistoric times, and to trace their influence, in Arabia, Persia and Egypt; on the early Syrian Gnostics, and on the Jews during their Babylonian captivity, whence they evidently derived their Kabalistic philosophy. We shall have to glance, if only cursorily, at the doctrines and practices of sects which, at first sight, may appear to have so little in common. These include the Druids, the Manicheans and Gnostics, with all their developments traceable through to the Pythagorean system: the Templars; the Essenes, Therapeutæ, Nazarenes, and their modern representatives, the Mandaites, or Christians of St. John; the Sabeans, Nabatheans and Samaritans; the Sufeites, and the various Dervish Orders; the secret sects of Islam, the Ismaeli, Batenians, Karmatians, and Metawileh; the Lodge of Wisdom at Cairo, the Assassins, the Nusairis, and the Druses. The links in each case have lain ready to hand throughout the ages. All that was needed was some loving and careful hand to attempt to weld them into an homogeneous chain, strong enough to bear the strain of keen criticism from the majority of my Masonic brethren which I am willing and prepared to brave, in the hopes that some, perchance, may be strengthened in their own convictions by the perusal of these pages.

It has been largely a task of collating the writings of

others, putting them, as it were, in a fresh setting with the points of view of other authors. There should be a gain in lucidity and value, when a comparison is presented, or a condensation made, of that which has been noticed and described by men thoroughly engrossed in the subject they have written about, in the majority of cases, from a non-Masonic view-point. In order to ascertain more clearly the reasons for many points of ritual in which will be found the connections with modern Freemasonry, it has been necessary to deal at some length with the Creeds of Mohammedans, Nusairis, and Druses. But this of itself will no doubt be found an interesting study by most of those who purchase and read this volume, who are interested in Craft Ritual, or in the symbolism of the higher Masonic Degrees. In this earnest hope I leave myself and my labours in their kindly hands.

In the preparation of this work I have benefited largely by the kind suggestions of my good friend, Mr. William Tait, of Belfast, and through him I have had access to some useful notes of the late Mr. A. L. Rawson. I am most grateful also to W. Bro. W. J. Songhurst, the Librarian and Secretary of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, for permission to reprint Mr. Haskett Smith's paper on *The Druses*; and to the Theosophical Society, for permission to reprint an article by Madam Blavatsky. I have endeavoured to give full attribution to the many authors, alive or dead, from whom I have quoted at more or less length, especially Miss Lucy Garnett, whose unique details with regard to Dervish ceremonies I have so fully made use of.



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SECRET SECTS OF SYRIA

CHAPTER I

THE ROOT PRINCIPLES OF ALL FREEMASONRY

" FROM the commencement of the world," says William Preston,[1] " we may trace the foundation of Masonry. Ever since symmetry began, and harmony displayed her charms, our Order has had a being. During many ages, and in many different countries, it has flourished. No art, no science, preceded it. In the dark periods of antiquity, when literature was in a low state, and the rude manners of our forefathers withheld from them that knowledge we now so amply share, Masonry diffused its influence. This science unveiled, arts arose, civilization took place, and the progress of knowledge and philosophy gradually dispelled the gloom of ignorance and barbarism. Government being settled, authority was given to laws, and the assemblies of the fraternity acquired the patronage of the great and the good, while the tenets of the profession diffused unbounded utility.

" Masonry is a science confined to no particular country, but it extends over the whole terrestrial globe. Wherever arts flourish, there it flourishes too, and by secret and inviolable signs, carefully preserved among the fraternity, it becomes a universal language. The distant Chinese, the wild Arab, and the American savage will embrace a brother Briton. The universal principles of the art unite in one indissoluble bond of affection men of the most opposite tenets, of the most distant countries, and of the most contradictory opinions ; so that in every nation a Mason will find a friend, and in every climate a home."

[1] *Illustrations of Masonry*, p. 6. London, 1801.

No matter what degree of Masonry we are concerned with, or in whatever country Masonic rites are practised, the groundwork is ever the same, the Immortality of the Soul, symbolized more or less dramatically by the death of a victim, and the methods to be adopted to restore that victim to life, of another kind. In tracing, therefore, the antecedents of our present ritual we must endeavour to find the earliest mention of this doctrine of the Resurrection. The story of the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension would appear to have been clearly foreshadowed, and pictorially represented, some two hundred thousand years before our Christian era ! The combined discoveries of geologists and Oriental scholars and decipherers of cuneiform inscriptions leave no room for doubt on this important point. A pictograph reproduced by Dr. Churchward,[1] taken from some ruins in Central America, which he reckons to be over two hundred thousand years old, " represents the Crucifixion during the period of the Stellar Cult, and shows a victim crucified on the two Poles, North and South. The hieroglyphics state that this is the God of the North and the South, the Great One of the Seven Glorious Ones (attributes). A Crown of Thorns is depicted on his head. His side is pierced with a spear, from whence blood and water is falling on his spiritual name, which, in Egyptian, is Amsu. He is supported by his four brothers, Amsta, Hapi, Taumutf, and Kabhsenuf, four ' Living Creatures ' represented elsewhere in primeval drawings by a Lion, a Calf, a Man, and an Eagle, symbols of the Four Evangelists : seen by St. John in his Apocalyptic vision : and also handed down to us, in the ritual of the Royal Arch, as the Banners of the four armies of the Israelites. This Crucified Deity was known by different names in different countries, namely : Horus, of the Stellar Cult of the Egyptians ; Huitzilopochtli, of the Astecs ; Zipe, of the Zapotics ; Hacaxipectli, of Guatemala ; Ptah-Seker-Ausar, of the Egyptians, in their Solar Cult ; Tien-hwang Ta-Tici, of the Chinese ; Merodach, of the Babylonians ; Iu, or Ea, of the Chaldeans, Assyrians and Druids of Britain ; Uiracocha, of the Peruvians, and many other names in various parts of the world ; yet all

[1] *Arcana of Freemasonry*, p. 41.

one and the same, as proved by the same signs and symbols always associated with him, in whatever part of the world found."[1] From these ancient pictures, from hieroglyphics in Egypt and Central and South America, above all from the deciphering of the *Book of the Dead*, with its complete Ritual of the Ancient Mysteries, we know for certain that, ages before the Flood, our primeval brethern were assembling in the forerunners of Masonic Lodges, using signs, symbols, and secret words, many of which are still in use in our own Lodges: that they had three principal degrees, and thirty-three in all: that their temples were built in the form of a double cube: and that there were always two pillars at the entrance to these temples.

But to deal with Masonry at this early period of the world's history is not within the scope of the present work. Those who need convincing proof of the extreme antiquity of the Masonic ritual should study Dr. Churchward's two books closely,[2] and also the *Book of the Dead*, of which an admirable translation has been prepared by Dr. Wallis Budge.

According to this *Book of the Dead*,[3] the builders of temples, who were the first originals of our Brotherhood, and who were initiated into the Lesser Mysteries, were called Craftsmen and Companions. At the time of the Stellar Cult a body of these Craftsmen, it is recorded, left Egypt and travelled into the Land of Chaldea. The Stellar Cult became merged in the Solar Cult. The Sun and Moon in addition to the Seven Stars became part and parcel of the religion of the country. Then followed the Great Deluge, which appears to have left Syria the centre of the habitable earth, to carry Masonry back again into Egypt through the agency of the Shepherd Kings. With the introduction of the Sun as an object of worship, as symbolical of the Grand Architect of the Universe, and representing to His human creatures the magnificence of His Glory and Power, came a change of name of that All-powerful Deity from Horus, God of the North Pole-Star, to El-Shaddai, God of the South Pole-Star. Here we find the origin of Operative, as distinct

[1] Churchward's *Arcana of Freemasonry*, p. 42.
[2] *Arcana of Freemasonry* and *Signs and Symbols of Primordial Man.*
[3] *Book of the Dead*, chap. lxxx.

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from Speculative, Freemasonry, as we have it at the present day. They use the same name for the Deity: they salute the rising sun with the seven-fold salute which was originally Stellar, but continued as an early Solar custom: they have a circular altar in the centre exactly under the plumb-line which comes down from the God of the Pole Star North. El-Shaddai was the Phœnician name for Sut, to whom the Egyptians erected the Second Pyramid, the First being dedicated to Horus, the North Polar Star, called by the Chaldeans "Iao," probably from "Iu," one of the Egyptian names for Horus. Both Iao and El-Shaddai were divine names in use amongst the Phœnicians. Whilst the Sacred Name of Iao, as well as its Egyptian origin, Iu, developed amongst the Hebrews into Jah, and its extension, Jahovah as handed down in the ritual of the Royal Arch Degree, the Druids in Britain worshipped the Deity under the names of Iau and Hu. Here, then, would seem to be convincing proof, sufficient one would think for the most sceptical of English Masons, that it is to the Phœnicians, journeying from the East to the Western Isles, that we owe knowledge of signs, symbols, and words, unchanged in most respects, certainly in the more important aspects, from those used by our extremely ancient brethren, in pre-historic ages.

If further proof is wanted of the Eastern source of our rituals let us again turn to the Royal Arch Degree which, while commemorating Masonry as practised by the Jews in their Babylonian captivity, makes use of certain words long anterior to that epoch. Probably few Egyptian scholars will attempt to refute the fact that the Chaldee words made use of in Royal Arch Masonry were in use, of a certainty, in this country, at least a hundred years before the discovery of the Rosetta Stone enabled the ancient Chaldee language to be read, by deciphering Babylonian and Assyrian tablets. Obviously, therefore, such words as were used in our rituals must have been transmitted orally. And if transmitted orally, it very naturally follows, equally plainly one would think, that they have been transmitted from the age when they were in use as the Babylonian and Chaldee language, that is, before the conquest by the Persians, and their introduction of their own language. I am a member of two

Orders of extreme antiquity, both closely allied to Masonry, though probably unknown to the large majority of English Freemasons, too many of whom seem to imagine that the three Craft Degrees constitute the sum total of Masonry. In both of these the Sacred Name Iao is employed in speaking of the Almighty Father of the Universe, in one accompanied by the ancient Chaldean words Khonx-Om-Pax,[1] following the Egyptian words—Khabs-Am-Pekht, a very significant proof of the antiquity of the source from which this particular ritual is derived. The other Order to which I refer claims to have preserved its ritual from the inhabitants of the submerged Atlantis. And however remote may seem this origin, it is a peculiar fact that the symbolical representation of the Sun and the Moon in this Order, the arrangement of the Temple, and much of the ritual, would appear to synchronize solely with the very earliest hieroglyphic descriptions of both Stellar and Solar worship.

The universality of the science, to which attention is called in our Masonic ritual, is evidenced by the unexpected quarters in which Masonic signs and secrets are suddenly found available. While the Solar ritual alluded to just above is in many respects similar to one in use amongst the Aborigines of Australia, the three steps of our First Degree will admit one, it is said on good authority, to the innermost and most sacred shrines of certain Hindu temples. Later on in this work will be found an instance of the Five Points of Fellowship being hailed with delight by the Nusairi, as showing that their visitor was indeed a Brother Mason. My own sponsor in Masonry, when prospecting in Mexico, was received into blood-brotherhood by the chief of an Indian tribe far remote from civilization, with signs, unknown to him then, but afterwards entrusted to him when being made a Knight of Malta.

Scotch Masons may be interested to learn that in some extremely ancient remains of a Druidic temple at Glammis, the Five Points of Fellowship are very clearly defined on a stone known locally as the Gravestone of Malcolm II, but certainly of much earlier date than his reign, which ended in 1302. Here this world-wide sign of Masonic brotherhood

[1] See Appendix.

is surmounted by a square vessel, into which two forms are disappearing, only their legs showing, a solstitial symbol of the commencing of a fresh year which we may presume it was thus hoped would be distinguished for an especial display of brotherly love. And on surrounding stones are to be be found emblems showing a very close connection with the symbolical religions of the Hindus and other Asiatic peoples of the earliest pre-historic origin.

CHAPTER II

THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES

"The institution of the Mysteries," says G. S. Mead, "is the most interesting phenomenon in the study of religion. The idea of antiquity was that there was something to be *known* in religion, secrets or mysteries into which it was possible to be initiated; that there was a gradual process of unfolding in things religious; in fine, that there was a science of the soul, a knowledge of things unseen.

"A persistent tradition in connection with all the great Mystery-institutions was that their several founders were the introducers of all the arts of civilization; that they were either themselves gods or were instructed in them by the gods—in brief, that they were men of far greater knowledge than any who had come after; they were the teachers of infant races. And not only did they teach them the arts, but they instructed them in the nature of the gods of the human soul, and the unseen world, and set forth how the world came into existence and much else." [1]

The first and most important secret of the Mysteries, whether celebrated in Eastern Asia, Egypt, or Greece, was, of course, that which is the grandest truth in the Universe, the absolute Unity in Trinity of God, and His Eternal Nature, apart from all other existences. The second was the existence of the Holy Spirit, the *femina* nature of the Deity, and the medium by which all creation was made manifest. The third secret was the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of the Third Person of the Trinity and the "Blessed hope of Everlasting Life," thereby revealed to the human race. These principles were only in part communicated to those initiated into the Lesser Mysteries,

[1] *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, p. 46. London, 1906.

a full revelation being rigidly preserved for those privileged to obtain admission into the Greater Mysteries. Epiphanius says that Enoch [1] was the founder of the Mysteries, although he does not say whether of the Lesser, the Greater, or of both.

Under the name of Mithraic Worship, the Supreme Deity was symbolized for adoration as the Sun, which the name Mithras signifies, while it also, if taken at its numerical value in the Greek letters, produced the number 365, the days of the year, just as does the name Abraxas of the Gnostics, and Belenos, the name given to the Sun in ancient Gaul. On Mithraic monuments we find representations of the globe of the sun, the club, and the bull, symbols of the highest truth, the highest creative activity, and the highest vital power. Such a Trinity agrees with that of Plato, which consists of the Supreme Good, The Word, and the Soul of the World: with that of Hermes Trismegistus, consisting of Light, Intelligence and Soul; and with that of Porphyry, which consists of Father, Word and Supreme Soul.

The religion of the Magi, says Franz Cumont, the great authority on Mithraism,[2] "which was the highest blossom of the genius of Iran, exercised a deep influence on Occidental culture at three different periods. In the first place, Parseeism had made a very distinct impression on Judaism in its formative stage, and several of its cardinal doctrines were disseminated by Jewish colonists throughout the entire basin of the Mediterranean, and subsequently even forced themselves on Orthodox Catholicism."

"The influence of Mazdaism on European thought was still more direct when Asia Minor was conquered by the Romans. Here, from time immemorial, colonies of Magi who had migrated from Babylon lived in obscurity, and welding together their traditional beliefs and the doctrines of the Grecian thinkers, had elaborated, little by little, in these barbaric regions a religion original despite its complexity. At the beginning of our era we see this religion suddenly emerging from the darkness, and pressing forward, rapidly

[1] See Appendix: "Legend of Enoch."
[2] *Mysteries of Mithra*, American translation, Chicago, 1903: preface to the French edition.

and simultaneously, into the valleys of the Danube and the Rhine, and even into the heart of Italy. The nations of the Occident felt vividly the superiority of the Mazdean faith over their ancient national creeds, and the populace thronged to the altars of the exotic god. But the progress of the conquering religion was checked when it came in contact with Christianity. The two adversaries discovered with amazement, but with no inkling of their origin, the similarities which united them. The defeat which ensued for Mithraism was not due entirely to the superiority of the evangelical ethics, nor to that of the Apostolic doctrine regarding the teaching of the Mysteries; it perished, not only because it was encumbered with the onerous heritage of a superannuated past, but also because its liturgy and its theology had retained too much of its Asiatic colouring to be accepted by the Latin spirit without repugnance. For a converse reason the same battle, waged in the same epoch in Persia between these same two rivals, was without success, if not without honour, for the Christians; and in the realms of the Sassanids Zoroastrianism never once was in serious danger of being overthrown."

The defeat of Mithraism did not, however, utterly annihilate its power. It had prepared the minds of the Occident for the reception of a new faith which, like itself, came also from the banks of the Euphrates, and which resumed hostilities with entirely different tactics. Manicheism appeared as its successor. This was the final assault made by Persia on the Occident—an assault more sanguinary than the preceding, but one which was ultimately destined to be repulsed by the powerful resistance offered to it by the Christian empire.

A scrupulous respect for the traditional practices of their sect characterized the Magi of Asia Minor, and continued to be manifested with unabated ardour among their Latin successors. On the downfall of paganism the latter still took pride in worshipping the gods according to the ancient Persian rites which Zoroaster is said to have instituted. These rites sharply distinguished their religion from all others that were practised at the same time in Rome, and prevented its Persian origin from ever being forgotten.

Amongst the few reliable details that have been preserved for us of the Mithraic ceremonies, a text of St. Jerome, confirmed by a series of inscriptions, informs us that there were seven degrees of initiation, and that the mystic successively assumed the name of Raven, Occult, Soldier, Lion, Persian, Runner of the Sun, and Father. On the bas-reliefs they are represented in garbs suitable to those titles, which, or something similar, appear to have been common survivals of an extremely primitive cult amongst all nations of antiquity. The seven degrees of initiation through which the candidate was forced to pass, in order to acquire perfect wisdom and purity, answered to the seven planetary spheres which the soul was forced to traverse in order to reach the abode of the blessed. From being Ravens the initiated were promoted to the ranks of Occult in which, hidden by a veil, they remained invisible to the rest of the congregation, to exhibit them constituting a special and solemn rite. The Soldier formed part of the sacred militia of the invincible god, and waged war under his direction on the powers of evil. The dignity of Persian recalled the first origin of the Mazdean religion, and he who obtained it assumed, during the sacred ceremonies, the Oriental custom of wearing the Phrygian cap, which had also been bestowed on Mithra. The latter having been identified with the Sun, his servitors invested themselves with the name of Runner of the Sun (*Heliodromoi*) ; lastly, the title of Fathers was borrowed from the Greeks, among whom this honorable appellation frequently designated the directors of the community.

In this septuple division of the rite, according to Porphyry, the taking of the first three degrees did not authorize participation in the Mysteries. These Initiates, comparable to the Christian Catechumens, were the servants (*Huperetountes*). Only those who had received the Lion degree became Participants (*Metechontes*) and it is for this reason that the grade of *Leo* is mentioned more frequently in the inscriptions than any other. Finally, at the summit of the hierarchy were placed the Fathers (*Patres Sacrorum*) who appear to have presided over the sacred ceremonies, and retained until their death the general direction of the cult. We do not

know if the initiates were obliged to remain in any one of the grades for a fixed time. The Fathers probably decided when they were sufficiently prepared to receive the higher initiation, which they conferred in person.

In the degree of Soldier (*Miles*), after taking a solemn obligation of secrecy, and numerous lustrations with consecrated water, the candidate was "sealed," not as in the Christian liturgy with an unction on the forehead, but with a mark burnt in with a red-hot iron. In the degree of Lion there were fresh purifications, but with honey poured on the hands, and applied to the tongue. A loaf of bread and a goblet of water were placed before the officiating priest, who consecrated them with a sacred formula. Wine was at a later date mingled with the water, replacing the intoxicating juice of the Haoma, used in the original Mazdean service. Only initiates who had attained the grade of Lion were allowed to partake of these oblations, from which was probably derived their title of Participants. It was after the imbibing of this sacred wine, to which supernatural effects, which were possibly akin to intoxication, were ascribed, that the candidate underwent the awe-inspiring trials which have always been associated with the Mysteries by the early Christian writers.

The Sanctuaries of the Mysteries were always subterranean, and in each was placed a ladder with seven steps, by which ascent was made to the Mansions of Felicity. The candidate for initiation was prepared by numerous lustrations with fire, water, and honey, after which he had to pass through numerous probations, ending with a fast of fifty days' continuance, spent in perpetual silence and solitude. If the candidate escaped partial or complete insanity, an occurrence of great frequency, and surmounted the trials of his fortitude, he was eligible for higher honours and the superior degrees.

According to Heckethorn[1] the first degree was inaugurated with purifying lustrations, and a sign was set on the neophyte's brow, whilst he offered to the Deity a loaf and a cup of water. A crown was presented to him on the point of a sword, and he put it on his head with the

[1] *Secret Societies*, p. 31.

words "Mithras is my crown." In the second degree the candidate put on armour, to meet the representatives of giants and wild beasts whom he was sent to encounter in the subterranean vaults of the temple, the characters being entrusted to priests perfectly prepared to attack the candidate fiercely and often inflict serious wounds on him, possibly causing loss of life. In the next degree he was robed with a mantle on which were painted the signs of the Zodiac, in which he again encountered appalling sights of terrifying monsters. Escaping these in due course, he was saluted as a "Lion of Mithras," alluding to the Zodiacal sign in which the Sun obtained his greatest power. Then the grand secret was imparted to him, which, from the most authenticated traditions, we may conclude was the highest knowledge concerning the origin of the universe, and the attributes, perfections, and works of the Almighty Creator.

The Lesser Mysteries, says Banier, served as a preparation for the Greater, celebrated at Eleusis, and by their means candidates were initiated into the secret rites of Ceres. After having passed through a good many trials, the candidate was termed Mystes, that is, qualified for being very soon initiated into the Greater Mysteries, and to become Epoptes, or the witness of the most secret Mysteries, which was not permitted until after five years' probation, during which he might enter into the vestibule of the temple, but not into the Sanctuary. And even when he was Epoptes, and enjoyed that privilege, there were still many things of which the knowledge was reserved to the priests alone. At his initiation, the candidate was introduced into the Temple by night, after washing his hands at the entry, and placing on his head a crown of myrtle. Then he was presented with a little box, containing the Laws of Ceres, and the ceremonies of her Mysteries, which he was told to read, and transcribe. After this, terrifying darkness, peals of thunder, vivid flashes of lightning, and the appearance of multitudes of terrifying figures were succeeded by visions of charming beauty.

It may be said, says Theo of Smyrna, that "philosophy is the initiation into and the tradition of real and true Mysteries. But of initiation there were five parts. That which has the precedency indeed, and is the first, is *purifica-*

tion. For the Mysteries are not to be imparted to all who are willing to be initiated, but to the pure only. And the second thing after purification is the *Tradition* of the Mystery. The third stage is denominated *Inspection.* Then comes binding the head, and placing on it crowns : so that he who is initiated is now able to deliver to others the Mysteries which he has himself received, whether it be the mystery of a torch-bearer, or of the interpretation of the sacred ceremonies, or of some other priesthood. But the fifth thing, which arises from these others, is the felicity which results from being dear to Divinity, and the associate of the Gods." The Epoptæ in the Mysteries, says Faber, in his *Pagan Idolatry,* were supposed invariably to have " experienced a certain regeneration, or new birth, by which they entered upon a new state of existence, and were deemed to have acquired a great increase of light and knowledge. Hitherto they were exoteric and profane—now they become esoteric and holy. The rite itself consisted sometimes in the aspirant's being born, as it were, out of a small covered boat, in which he had been previously committed to the mercy of the ocean ; sometimes in his being produced from the image of a cow, within which he had been first enclosed ; and sometimes in his coming forth through the door of a dark, rocky cave, or artificial stone cell, in which he had been shut up during the time appointed by the Hierophant."

The Elysian fields, into which the Epoptæ were conducted after their fearful progress through the realms of death and darkness, were variously said to be situated on the summit of a lofty mountain, in the orb of the Moon, and in the midst of the Ocean. According to the Chaldean teaching, the soul, after its various migratory purgations, is exhorted to hasten to the luminous abode of the Almighty Father from whom it emanated, and to seek for Paradise.

In the archæology of Wales, says Kenealy,[1] where the Eleusinian Mysteries passed under the name of Ceridwen, the Holy Spirit, we find traces of the oath which was imposed on the aspirant. The latter, led by an accompanying priest before the Hierophant, or Chief Priest, solemnly pledged himself, under terrible penalties in case of violation, to

[1] *Book of God,* ii. p. 53.

preserve the laws of the Sanctuary, however he might be assaulted by his enemies, or deserted by his friends. In the Isle of Anglesea, these rites took place in a sacred twilight, gradually replacing the pitch darkness into which the candidate was first taken, and he passed through fire, as the symbol of GOD, and then through water, as the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

In the Eleusinian Misteries the candidates received on their foreheads the mark of the Tau Cross, symbolizing the Light they were admitted into, and they were given at the same time a sprig of acacia, an evergreen plant opening its leaves in the morning and shutting them at night, symbolizing Innocence, or freedom from sin, as its name implies, conveying the same idea as the myrtle of the Mithraic Mysteries, and the palm used in the Egyptian Rites. Its use by Freemasons, though attributed to a different reason, has evidently had its origin in the Mysteries, as will be clear to every intelligent student.

The ancient Mithraic Mysteries were celebrated on the 25th of December, which was called *The Day of the Nativity of the Invincible.* In Greece, the Eleusinian Mysteries commenced on the 15th of September, and lasted to the 23rd, thus being held at the same period as the Hebrew Feast of Tabernacles.

In a subsequent stage of the Mysteries the fully initiated were made to undergo circumcision, and from this would appear to have originated the idea of non-Masons that all candidates for admission into the Craft had to suffer branding or mutilation, with the satisfaction in consequence of the initiate on finding this was merely a myth.

Among the ancient Hindus, the periods of initiation were regulated by the increase and decrease of the moon, and the Mysteries were divided into four degrees, the age at which the candidate might be initiated into the first degree being as early as eight years. He was then prepared by a Brahmin who became his spiritual guide of the second degree, the probationary ceremonies of which consisted in incessant occupation in prayers, fastings, ablutions, and the study of astronomy. In the hot season he sat exposed to five fires, four blazing around him, with the sun above; in

the rains, he stood uncovered; in the cold season he wore wet clothing. To participate in the high privileges which the Mysteries were believed to confer, he was sanctified by the sign of the cross, and subjected to the probation of the pastos, the tomb of the sun, the coffin of Hiram, darkness—hell, all symbolical of the first three properties. His purification being completed, he was led at night to the cavern of initiation. This was brilliantly illuminated, and there sat the three Hierophants, in the East, West, and South, representing the Gods Brahama, who was painted red to represent substance; Vishnu, painted blue to symbolize space; Siva, painted white, in contrast to the black night of eternity, surrounded by attendant mystagogues dressed in appropriate vestments. The initiation was begun by an apostrophe to the sun, addressed by the name of Pooroosh, here meaning the vital soul, or the universal spirit of Brahm; and the candidate, after some further preliminary ceremonies, was made to circumambulate [1] the cavern three times, and afterwards conducted through seven dark caverns, during which period the wailings of Mahadeva for the loss of Siva were represented by dismal howlings. The usual paraphernalia of light, of dismal sounds, and horrid phantoms, were produced to terrify and confuse the aspirant. Having arrived at the last cavern, the sacred conch was blown, the folding doors thrown open, and the candidate was admitted into an apartment filled with dazzling lights, ornamented with statues and emblematic figures richly decorated with gems, and scented with the most fragrant perfumes, intended to represent Paradise. With eyes riveted on the altar, the candidate was taught to expect the descent of the Deity in the bright pyamidal fire that blazed upon it; and in a moment of enthusiasm thus artificially produced, the candidate might indeed persuade himself that he actually beheld Brahm seated on the lotus, with his four heads and arms, representing the four elements and the four quarters of the globe, and bearing in his hands the emblems of eternity and power, the circle and fire. The symbol of initiation was a cord of seven threads, knotted thrice three.

In the Egyptian Mysteries, the candidate for initiation

[1] See Appendix.

conducted by a guide, was led to a deep, dark well or shaft in the pyramid in which, erected over vast subterranean caverns, their initiation ceremonies were carried out. Into this well, provided with a torch, he descended by means of a ladder fixed to the side. Arrived at the bottom, he saw two doors, one of them barred, the other yielding to the touch of his hand. Passing through it, he beheld a winding gallery, whilst the door behind him shut with a clang that reverberated through the vaults. Inscriptions like the following met his eye: "Whoso shall pass along this road alone, and without looking back, shall be purified by fire, water and air: and overcoming the fear of death shall issue from the bowels of the earth to the light of day, preparing his soul to receive the Mysteries of Isis." Proceeding onward, the candidate arrived at another iron gate, guarded by three armed men, whose shining helmets were surmounted by emblematic animals, the Cerberus of Orpheus. Here the candidate had offered to him the last chance of going back, if so inclined. Electing to go forward, he underwent the trial by fire, by passing through a hall filled with inflammable substances in a state of combustion, and forming a bower of fire. The floor was covered with a grating of red hot iron bars, leaving, however, narrow interstices where he might safely place his feet. Having surmounted this obstacle, he had to encounter the trial by water. A wide and dark canal, fed by the waters of the Nile, arrested his progress. Placing the flickering lamp upon his head, he plunged into the canal, and swimming to the opposite bank, found the greatest trial, that by air, awaiting him. He landed upon a platform leading to an ivory door, bounded by two walls of brass, into each of which was inserted an immense wheel of the same metal. He in vain attempted to open the door, when, espying two large iron rings affixed to it, he took hold of them. Suddenly, the platform sank from under his feet, a chilling blast of air extinguished his lamp, the two brazen wheels revolved with formidable rapidity and stunning noise, whilst he remained suspended by the two rings over the fathomless abyss. But before he was quite exhausted the platform returned, the ivory door opened, and he saw before him a magnificent temple brilliantly illuminated, and filled with

the priests of Isis clothed in the mystic insignia of their offices, the Hierophant at their head. But the ceremonies of initiation did not cease here. The candidate was subjected to a series of fastings, which gradually increased for nine times nine days. During this period a rigorous silence was imposed upon him, which, if he preserved inviolate, he was at length fully initiated into the esoteric doctrines of Isis, and publicly proclaimed as a person who had been initiated into the first degree.

But little is known of the rites of the second degree, called the Mysteries of Serapis. Apuleius, who has given us so many details of the first degree, scarcely touches upon the second, and Iamblichus seems almost equally reticent. It would appear, however, as might be perhaps anticipated, to have been a rite of mystical death, followed by the resurrection in the third degree, called the Mysteries of Osiris, in which the candidate, as in the third Craft degree, typified the murdered Osiris.

In most cases, the initiation ceremony concluded with this third degree, but Egyptian monarchs, and the higher grades of the priesthood, were initiated subsequently into a fourth degree, of seven grades, involving the rite of circumcision, if not already performed, much solitary meditation, and prolonged fasting. The postulant once again went through a mystical death, before being finally instructed in the higher branches of science, especially astronomy, astrology, and communication with unseen worlds.

The whole aim of all the ancient Mysteries would clearly seem to be moral and instructive, and it is only as time went on that licentiousness and mystification replaced the religious symbolism of the original institutions.

A relic of the ancient mysteries can be found in the following account of an arduous trial of fortitude employed in certain female lodges in Paris. A candidate for admission, we are told, was usually very much excited. During a part of the ceremony she was conducted to an eminence, and told to look down at what awaited her if she faltered in her duty. Beneath her appeared a frightful abyss in which a double row of iron spikes were visible. No doubt her mind was in a chaos of fanaticism, for instead of shrinking at the sight,

she exclaimed, "I can encounter all," and sprang forward. At that moment a secret spring was touched, and the candidate fell, not on the spikes, but on a green bed in imitation of a verdant plain. She fainted, but was soon recovered by her friends, when, the scene having changed, she was reanimated and soothed by the sweet strains of choral music.

The priests were practically the masters of the old world, says the learned but anonymous author of *The Canon*, in which the ancient religions, with their ceremonies and beliefs, are treated from a numerical standpoint. Everything and everybody, he says was subservient to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and no work could be undertaken without its authority. "That the priests were legitimately entitled to regulate the building of the temples of the GODS, nobody will deny. And that they did exercise this control is beyond dispute. For we find that Freemasons, or somebody corresponding to the mediæval Freemasons, with exclusive privileges and secrets required for building the temples, under ecclesiastical authority, have always existed. And the knowledge which we possess of the mediæval Freemasons is sufficient to show that their secrets were the secrets of religion, that is, of mediæval Christianity."

"It must be borne in mind, that only the vaguest ideas prevail as to the mystical secrets of the old priests.[1] Everybody knows that the Egyptians, Greeks, and other Eastern nations concealed the vital doctrines of their theology from the ignorant and vulgar, and it was only by a gradual process of initiation that the meaning of the sacred writings and ceremonies was explained. And then, after this preparation, the initiates were allowed to be full partakers in the religious rites.

"The doctrine of these Mysteries is assumed to have been a defined scientific tradition, communicated orally to the initiates or mystics, who secretly passed it on from generation to generation. This mysticism, however, must not be confounded with the speculative mistiness which is cultivated by certain dreamy philosophers of our own day. The Mystic (*Mustes*) in the old sense has naturally become extinct, together with the *Gnosis* which formerly instructed him."

[1] *The Canon*, p. 4. London, 1897.

We do not know if the Hebraized or Christianized version of the Masonic ritual, as we now know it, has anything more than faint resemblance to its primitive form. We have some slight intimation of the ritual of the Mysteries from allusions in the works of the early writers, Christian and pagan, some of whom had themselves been initiated. More details are given, for those who can read between the lines of carefully veiled symbolism, in the Kabala, the works of Iamblichus, and those attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, which are some of our most direct sources of information on the subject. The Kabala, perhaps contains the nearest approach to a direct revelation of the ancient secrets of the old world, and it has undoubtedly formed an important part of our Masonic traditions. The Christian equivalent to the word Kabala was *Gnosis* (knowledge), and from innumerable references in the writings of the Fathers it is evident that the Gnostics, whose doctrines will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter, like the older Christians in the construction of the Gospel and ritual of their Church, perpetuated the same mystical tradition which they had received from the Hebrews. The nature of their " knowledge " is thus stated by Clement of Alexandria [1] :—" And the Gnosis itself is that which has descended by transmission to a few, having been imparted unwritten by the Apostles." St. Basil [2] also alludes to it thus : " They (the Fathers) were well instructed to preserve the veneration of the Mysteries in silence. For how could it be proper, publicly to proclaim in writing the doctrine of those things which no unbaptized person may so much as look upon ? "

[1] *Miscellanea*, Book vi, chap. vii.
[2] *De Spiritu Sancto*, chap. xxvii.

CHAPTER III

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE LEBANON

In writing of the Druses and Nusairis, those lifelong inhabitants of the Lebanon, we are dealing with people who retain practices spoken of by the Patriarchs, and who still exhibit in their life and customs many of the metaphors made use of by the Prophets. Here, says Urquhart, "may be seen the rudiment of the Pyramid, and the element of the calculations carried by the Etruscans to the West.[1] The 'Exalted Horn' is still the wonderful appendage of the married Druse woman, and carries the conviction of being a practice of the remotest antiquity, and therefore evidence of the unbroken continuity of the people. The cubes superimposed on Syrian tombs present the very diagram of Lepsius in explaining his theory of the Pyramids. The carat, or division by twenty-four in Europe, preserved in the testing of the precious metal, the weighing of gems, and the division of ship property, is in common use in the Lebanon."

"The name given by these people to themselves is Sur. The race is the Surian, the *Zuroi* of the Greek, and Syrian modern tongues. The mountain is Gebel Suria. Lebanon is a foreign and descriptive term, from the Hebrew, implying 'white.' As it is the name they both use and cling to to-day, repudiating for their mountain the name of Lebanon, and for themselves that of Arab, so was it the name it bore in the time of Moses.[2] That the Hebrews should have called it by a name of their own invention shows how strange it was to them. The Jews, 700 years later, did not understand

[1] Urquhart, *History of the Lebanon*, vol. i. p. 15.

[2] "And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites the land which is on this side of Jordan, from the river of Arnon unto Mount Hermon; (which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it Shenir)."—Deut. iii. 8, 9.

the Syrian tongue. The Jews wanted no interpreter with the people of Canaan."

The circumstances which show that the Hebrews did not conquer the Lebanon, show likewise that the Canaanites had not conquered it before them. Had the same race occupied the mountain and the plain, or had the Canaanites conquered this mountain, the defeated and expelled nations would have retreated thither, and made there their stand, which they did not and they too gave to Gebel Suria a name of their own—*Shinir*. The people who, on the shores of the Atlantic, have preserved the names of " Hivite " and " Amonite," and recall the event of their dispersion by " Joshua the robber, the son of Nun," would not have forgotten and abandoned memory and name among inaccessible retreats and mountains fastnesses overlooking their native land. This is certain ; neither the Canaanites, when pressed by the Hebrews, nor the Hebrews, when pressed in their turn, ever took refuge in the Lebanon, as they must have done, had it not been already occupied by a powerful and warlike people.[1]

Xenophon speaks of the Suroi to the east as well as the west of the Euphrates, and Strabo makes these extend, mingled with the Arabs, from Cilicia to Judea, Phœnicia, and the coast ; just as to-day, were there a common name for Nusairis, Metawilis, Druses and Maronites, it would include the same districts. We may well consider then that these people have dwelt continuously in this land from the earliest peopling of the globe.

The Bible informs us that after the deluge had subsided, the land was divided amongst the sons of Noah. The Biblical account is confirmed and extended in the " Book of Jubilees," an Apocryphal book which bears traces of being written in the second century B.C., and whose narrative embraces material contained in the Book of Genesis and part of the Book of Exodus. We are told that Shem allotted to his son Arpachsad " all the land of the region of the Chaldees to the east of the Euphrates, bordering on the Red Sea, and all the

[1] " I found in the Lebanon," says Urquhart, " no less than three villages named *Ai Tat*—the Hittites of Scripture, and a tribe still flourishing in Morocco. The name of a people would not be given to its own villages, but settlements of refugees would naturally be so called."

waters of the desert close to the tongue of the sea which looketh toward Egypt, all the land of Lebanon and Amana to the border of the Euphrates." But Canaan, a son of Ham, "saw the land of Lebanon to the river of Egypt that it was very good, and he went not into the land of his own inheritance to the west to the sea (that is north-west Africa) but he dwelt in the land of Lebanon, eastward and westward from the border of Jordan and from the border of the sea." He refused to hearken to the complaints of his father and brethren, that he was entering a district not apportioned to him, but "dwelt in the land of Lebanon, he and his sons, unto this day." And for this reason the land is called Canaan.

Kesed, the brother of Arpachsad, had a son named Ur, who, in the land apportioned to his father, built a city, which he called after his own name, Ur of the Chaldees. Here he "taught his sons the researches of the Chaldees, to divine and augur, according to the signs of heaven." Ur's great-grandson was Abram, who, about A.M. 1936, went forth with Terah his father from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Lebanon, and into the Land of Canaan, and dwelt in the land of Haran.

The investigations of the last few years, writes Brace,[1] in the cuneiform inscriptions of Babylonia have brought forth remarkable results, both as regards an ancient faith and a forgotten people. "In Northern Babylonia existed, probably three thousand years before Christ, a race who had attained a considerable degree of cultivation, and who are supposed to have invented the cuneiform mode of writing.[2] They have been called the 'Akkadians,'[3] or Mountaineers, from the mountainous district on the north-east, whence they probably issued. They were long thought to be of stock foreign to the Semitic-Assyrian race who inhabited this region, and were believed to be Turanian, or connected in language with such races as the Finns, Turks, and Mongolians. But closer investigation makes it probable that they were mainly Semitic in blood, though perhaps

[1] C. Loring Brace, *The Unknown God,* p. 51. 1890.
[2] See Appendix, p. 317, where it is attributed to Enoch.
[3] Akkad, or Agade, their city, is mentioned in Genesis.

with strong Turanian mixture. The language of their inscriptions and tablets may have been a kind of classical or sacred dialect of the Semitic-Assyrians. This ancient people had made a considerable progress in civilization two thousand years before Christ, possibly nearly four thousand years. They had founded great libraries; their scholars had written treatises on astrology, magic,[1] and certain branches of mathematics; they possessed various histories of the wars and exploits of the Assyrian kings, and had constructed temples and many public buildings, and (to judge from their cuneiform tablets) seem to have carried on elaborate commercial affairs. This race or people is deeply interesting to the student of religions, because it manifestly drew its religious traditions from the same source as the Hebrews. And out from the region inhabited or influenced by the Akkadians came forth one of the great figures of history, Abraham the father of monotheism. It seems to have been a people with a deep sense of the mysterious and supernatural. The Chaldean magic became known to all Oriental races. It was in that stage of development in which it especially worshipped the elemental powers, or the spirits of earth and storm, and sky and sun, and dreaded the evil powers of the universe."

The Akkadians, like the generality of mankind in all ages, believed in a divine Mediator, whom they called *Silik-Khi*, and later Merodach or Marduk, worshipped at first as the Sun-God, and later as Bel, or Baal, the Lord. It is interesting that in the inscriptions of Cyrus (*c.* 549 B.C.) illustrating his reign, he (Cyrus) is spoken of as "governing in justice and righteousness," and Merodach is described as "beholding with joy the deeds of his vicegerent who is righteous in hand and heart."[2] "Merodach, who in his necessity raised the dead to life," goes on the inscription, "who blesseth all men praying in need, hath in goodness drawn nigh to him, hath made strong his name." The prophet Isaiah uses like words of the same Cyrus: "I (GOD) have raised him up in righteousness. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel

[1] The author no doubt alludes to Magian lore, as distinct from so-called "black magic."

[2] Sayce, *Ancient Monuments*, p. 156.

mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name ; I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." [1] The inspired prophet of Israel evidently believed that the Unknown God was guiding and strengthening the Persian conqueror, though he knew him not.

At the time of the Exodus of the Children of Israel, when they came in sight of the Promised Land, distinct injunctions were laid upon them as to certain tribes who were to be conquered by them, and into whose lands they were to enter, and take possession. These injunctions were relentlessly carried out, implying in many instances the blotting out by merciless slaughter of the whole race, and in some instances, the total destruction of all their possessions. But certain tribes were exempted from the same fate, and permitted to remain as neighbours, fulfilling from time to time certain acts of servitude, but with whom any such closer intermingling as would result in inter-marriage, and mixture of races, was prohibited. And amongst these are specified the Hivites.

The same God who directed the destinies of one branch of the descendants of His servant Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob, in their sojourning in Egypt, their return to Canaan, and their preservation as a totally distinct race to the present day, notwithstanding all efforts at extermination, was not likely to forget that other son of Abraham, Ishmael, any more than He did that other forefather of Arab tribes, Esau, the wandering son of Isaac. Ishmael, no doubt, in the mountainous region of the Lebanon, became the founder of a mighty nation, called after him to this day, and therefore certain to be preserved from annihilation when the descendants of Isaac, through Jacob, returned to the country of their great ancestor, Abraham.

Bryant,[2] quoting Eusebius and other early historians, says that " the sons of Ham seized upon all the country which reaches from Syria, and from the mountains of Albanus and Libanus. They also got possession of the places which lie upon the sea coast, even to the ocean, or great Atlantic." These people were chiefly Cushites, children of Cush, or

[1] Isaiah, xlv. 13 ; xiv. 4, 5.
[2] Bryant, *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, 6 vols. London, 1807.

Ethiopians, who over-ran Egypt, and conquered the former inhabitants of that country. Others, under the generic name of "Ammonites," occupied the principal islands of the Ægean Sea, also Sardinia, Crete, and Cyprus, apparently extending their journeying into the Isles of Britain, where the ancient Druids showed evident traces of Ammonite ancestry in the doctrines they taught, as far as they can be ascertained, and the religious rites which they practised.

Of the same family were also the Cadmians (descendants of Cadmus, identified with the Egyptian Taut, or Thoth), and the Phœnicians, and the Hivites or Ophites, who came from Egypt, and settled near Libanus and Baal Hermon, upon the confines of Canaan.[1] The Cadmians, according to Bryant, "probably founded the temple of Baal Hermon, in Mount Libanus (the ruins of Baal-Bec are mentioned in the Appendix), and formed one of the Hivite nations in those parts. Bochart has very justly observed, that a Hivite is the same as an Ophite; and many of this denomination resided under Mount Libanus, and Anti-Libanus; part of which was called Baal Hermon, as we learn from the sacred writings.[2] There were other Hivites, who are mentioned by Moses among the children of Canaan.[3] But the Cadmonites, and many of the people about Mount Libanus were of another family. The Hivites of Canaan Proper were those who, by a stratagem, obtained a treaty with Joshua.[4] Their chief cities were Gibeon, Cephirah, Beeroth and Kirjath Jearim. These lay within the tribe of Judah, and of Benjamin, who possessed the northern parts of Canaan. But the other Hivites, among whom were the Cadmonites, lay far to the north, under Libanus, at the very extremities of the country. The sacred writer distinguishes them from the Canaanites, as well as from the other Hivites, by saying 'the Hivites of Baal Hermon.' And he seems to distinguish the Sidonians, and justly, from the genuine Canaanites; for if we may credit profane history, the Cadmians had obtained the sovereignty in that city,[5] and the people were of a mixed race. They were particularly famed for their knowledge in astronomy, architecture, and music,

[1] Ibid. pp. 242, 460.
[2] Judges iii. 1, 3.
[3] Genesis x. 17.
[4] Joshua ix. 3, 7.
[5] See Appendix.

and were looked upon as adepts in every branch of science. They were the first navigators of the seas, and, if we may believe Herodotus, carried their arts westwards, to Rhodes, and to many parts (of the West) besides."

It is not within the reach of human comprehension, says Chasseaud, even did inclination tend in that way, to pretend to ascribe to the present Druses of the Lebanon any lineage which might prove their descent from the Hivites. "The fact is that no man living could accomplish such a feat; but as far as human foresight, or rather comprehension, can discern, the present inhabitants of the Lebanon are a people equally as brave as those who at the exodus of the Israelites were permitted to remain there, to act as a check upon their audacity, and to remind them that with God everything was possible, and without His assistance even the most trivial wars were dubious, both in their character and as to their results."

"Beyond a doubt, whatever grave theorists may say, there is an inherent virtue in people as a class, a peculiar system and belief which indirectly descends from generation to generation. Though these very people may have, in the lapse of time, changed their theories and doctrines; and although it might be a feasible theory to presume that the people who have so long held sway upon these very mountains are of the same race as that old people, the Hivites, we have unfortunately no record to refer to; no plausible ground on which to pronounce that such is the case. Although the beginning or the origin of the Druses, however, is and must ever remain an unsolvable mystery to the curious, it is feasible and plausible to suppose that this peculiar sect originated with the Freemasons that followed upon the steps of Solomon. Theirs was a mystery that has ever remained closed or a sealed secret, and so it is with the Druses."

The Israelites, whom Joshua had led into the land of Canaan, were a powerful and all-conquering people; and the Hivites of those ancient days must have been a remarkably courageous and resolute nation to have been able to withstand the subjugating arms of so potent a foe. Now, the present race of mountaineers, who inhabit those same heights of the Lebanon, are characterized by similar qualities of

undaunted bravery and stubborn determination; and as, of old, the Hivites resisted the Israelites effectually, whereas surrounding nations fell completely under their victorious swords, so have the present race of Druses sustained an indomitable resistance against the yoke which the Turkish Government succeeded in fully imposing upon all other classes inhabiting districts within the range of the Ottoman sway. The Druses have always substantially held their own, and the Turks cannot be said to have ever entirely subdued their rude independence.

It was not without a special object that the ancient Hivites were permitted to dwell in the Lebanon unscathed by the Israelites. If they were thus made a signal exception to that general practice by which the Israelites, on entering upon their new possessions, did not desist until they had scattered and rooted out all the infidels whom they encountered —if the Hivites were allowed to remain undispersed in their mountain homes in the land of Canaan—it was, as we are explicitly told in the words of the Bible, in order "to prove Israel by them." They became a peculiar instrument of Providence in bringing about the chastisement and humiliation of the children of Israel.

The Angel of the Lord had announced that the Hivites of the Lebanon would be as thorns in the sides of the Israelites —and they were so. It is a strange coincidence that, in like manner, have the Druses proved themselves as thorns in the sides of the Ottoman Government. They have not only resisted and overcome the various attempts made at different times to trample down their national freedom; but, professing a creed entirely foreign to that of the Ottoman Empire, they have also stood as a permanent and effectual barrier against the spread of Islamism upon their mountains.

Learned and inquisitive travellers who have ventured to penetrate into this district, besides the imminent peril they incurred from the inhospitality of a most inhospitable people, found an invariable check to the furtherance of their projects from a superstitious objection on the part of the inhabitants to the exhumation of any trifling stone or monument which might have contributed, through the

learning of those attempting their investigation, to universal information.

It is a strange theory, yet one undoubtedly based upon some ancient but substantial evidence, that every peculiar stone or rock marked by inscription or device, or in any way inviting the attention of the stranger, was there placed as a record of buried treasure. There is no reason to doubt that, in a country so often subjected to sudden commotions, people were in the practice of interring treasures and other property which did not admit of being transported or removed in the moment of sudden exigency; and consequently, even down to the present hour, these people are particularly jealous of any excavations which the natural researches of science may give rise to, but which they falsely attribute to motives of self-interest.

CHAPTER IV

THE SABEANS, WORSHIPPERS OF THE POLE STAR

In one of the five hymns of the *Rigveda*, the sacred book of the Brahmins, we are told that Vishvakarman, the God of Life, when creating the World, in order to make earth and heaven visible by his might, blew into existence, from all sides with his arms and wings, eyes, faces, arms and feet, thus begetting the single God, the Pole Star, *Agohya*. The Phœnicians looked upon the Pole Star as a goddess, whom they knew as *Astronœma*, the Deity presiding over growing corn, and in whose honour a New Year's Festival of the first fruits was held. In the Stellar Cult which preceded Solar worship the Pole Star was considered to be a one-eyed god, the giant Cyclops.

Our present Pole Star, the last of the constellation known by astronomers as Ursa Major, is worshipped in China under the name of *T'ien-hwang Ta-Ti*, "The Heavens-king who is the Great Ruler." Older Chinese records refer to the period when the Pole Star was in Cygnus, about 16500 B.C., and in Draco, about 3000 B.C. Chow-tsze, a distinguished Chinese scholar of the eleventh century, referred to it as "The Great Extreme." Under this name, or that of "The Great First," the Pole Star appears to have been worshipped in China, according to the *Yi-king*, or Book of Evolutions, which is considered to have been compiled about 1143 B.C., if not considerably earlier, that is, at least 600 years before Confucius, who refers to it. *Shang-Ti*, the Supreme Ruler of the Taoists, the followers of "The Way," was said to have as his celestial abode "a space round the North Pole." We read in the *Yi-king* that "day and night, the dark and the clear, succeed without end ;

such is the ordinary course of the *Tao* of celestial phenomena; a period of increase and a period of decrease, such is the *Tao* of heaven."

In the legends and institutions of the Sumero-Akkadians of the Euphrates delta, we are told[1] that the first civilizers of the country were the people led by the God *Ia-khan* or *Ia*, the fish, the son of the house (*I*) of the waters (*a*) the birth-ocean. He came thither clothed in fish-skins in the ship *Ma*, the constellation Argo, called by the Zends *Satavæsa*, or the star of the hundred (*sata*) creators, and landed at Wri-du or Wri-duga, the holy (*duga*) city, whither they came from Dilmun, the isle of God (*dil*), where Ia first appeared to human eyes as En-zag, the first-born (*zag*) of God (*en*), the fish-born son of the waters. This was the island of Bahrein celebrated for its pearl fishery.

These people, with whom the eastern Munda, or Malay sun-worshippers were intermingled, settled as the race known as Sumerians on the coasts of the Euphratean delta and the south-eastern shores of Arabia, forming the west coasts of the Persian Gulf, and divided the country into provinces, each of which had its central town surrounded by its associated villages, and its own gods worshipped in the village groves, together with its series of provincial and village festivals. This system prevailed over the Euphratean delta, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, and the whole of south-western Asia, and extended to Egypt, which was divided into Nones, each with its central city, holy groves, and local gods. These became, in the Euphratean countries, the provinces ruled by the numerous cities into which the land was divided, and in Syria the districts of the early Canaanite population of the Rephaim described in the Book of Joshua as cities with their associated villages. These districts must have been very small, for in the territory of the tribe of Judah, covering about 1,200 square miles, one hundred and six cities, each ruling its provinces, are mentioned, giving only about eleven square miles to each province.

These immigrants became, in their new home, the race

[1] I am indebted to *Primitive Traditional History*, by J. F. Hewitt, London 1907, 2 vols., for this condensed account of the origin of the Sabeans, and the references throughout are those given by Mr. Hewitt.

known in Akkadian and Assyrian history as the "Sons of Ia, the black-headed race," of Sumer. The first city founded by these Sumerians was Erech, originally called Unuk, meaning "the Place of the Settlement," the Enoch of Genesis iv. 17, and its seaport was Eriduga, the holy city.[1]

These Sumerian sons of the Mother-tree and the Holy Grove became the black Himyarite Sabeans of the Euphratean valley and the southern coasts of Arabia, the race known in Assyrian history as the Kalda or Chaldeans, who were skilled astronomers, and who, according to the Babylonian traditions recorded by Berosus, were the first rulers of the country after the Deluge, who studded it with towns forming, with their surrounding districts, associated provinces, and whose eighty-six kings reigned for 34,080 years.[2] They are proved to have measured time by the Pleiades, by the calendar of Telloh or Girsu, the city containing the oldest Akkadian monuments and inscriptions yet found, as their New Year's festival of the goddess Bau of the watery abyss was held in the middle of October.[3]

The modern representatives of these fresh settlers in the Euphrates valley are the Sabean Mandaites, who call themselves the Sons of the Word (*manda*) of God, the traders of Mesopotamia, who begin their solar-lunar zodaic with which they measure their months and years with the Parwe, the Pleiades.[4] They are now artisans and traders in Mesopotamia, but the Sabean race to which they belong were once rulers of Southern Arabia, called Saba. They were the chief merchants of the East, and their territory, described in Genesis x. 26-30 as the thirteen provinces ruled by the sons of Joktan, one of whose sons is Sheba or Saba, stretched from Arabia to the Mountain of the East, the Akkadian mother-mountain of Khar-sak-kurra, the mountain of the ox (*khar*), of the rain (*sah,*) of the East (*hurra*). They are called in Isaiah lx. 6, Jeremiah vi. 20, Ezekiel xxxvii. 22, the richest merchants in the East, who, as the sons of Dedan,

[1] Sayce, Hibbert Lectures for 1887, Lecture III, p. 184.
[2] Ibid. Babylonia, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed., vol. iii. p. 283.
[3] Sayce, Gifford Lectures for 1902, "The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia," Part II, Lecture IX, p. 473.
[4] Sachau, *Alberuni's Chronology of Ancient Nations*, chap. xi. p. 227.

one of the sons of Jokshan (Genesis xxv. 3), sold precious cloths for riding, that is, Persian saddle-bags, carpets, horns of ebony, and ivory brought from India (Ezekiel xxvii. 15, 20).

These people worship the Pole Star as the visible sign of the Father God. Their New Year's Day service is now held at the Autumnal Equinox,[1] but originally, as Alberuni tells us, they, and apparently all the people of the south-west of Asia, began their year with the Feast of Booths made of tree branches. This was held from the fourth to the eighteenth of Hilal Tishrin II, October–November.[2] In Arabia this festival is now a New Year's Fair.

"The Subbas, (or as they call themselves, Mandoyo, that is, 'ancients') of Mesopotamia," says O'Neill,[3] "still pray towards the Pole Star; and they put the sole door of their temple in its south side, in order that those who enter may face the Pole Star; and the reason of this is that Hivel Zivo, the Subban Creator, when he took up the government of the worlds he had formed, placed himself at the limit of the Seven Matarathos, at the extremity of the Universe, where the Pole Star was then created to cover him. Hivel Zivo seems to be another name for Avather, whom the Pole Star also covers, and who is the Judge of Souls. The theory that places the supreme, the upright, the unbiassed, the unwavering, divine judge at the only spot of the cosmos that seemed irremovable, unshakable—that is the Pole of the heavens—will be found to support in a remarkable degree the still older belief in the clear-seeing eye of the same Deity, still a well-defined attribute of the G.A.O.U. in our Masonic ritual. The supreme Babylonian God Ea (identified with Kronos) is called on the tablets the 'Lord with the clear-seeing Eye,' and also the 'motionless Lord,' which last seems to be an epithet peculiar to the polar divinity."

To these should be added the all-piercing eye of Atlas in the Odyssey; the eye of Ra, and the all-seeing eye in the forehead of Krishna. A close parallel is to be found in the Rig Veda (iii. 59) where "Mithra sustains the earth and the

[1] Hewitt, *Ruling Races of Prehistoric Times*, vol ii. essay viii. pp. 156, 165.

[2] Sachu, *Alberuni's Chronology of Ancient Nations*, chap. xviii, "The Fasts and Feasts of the Magians and Sabeans," pp. 315–17.

[3] *Night of the Gods*, vol. i. pp. 490. *et seq.*

sky, Mithra with unwinking eye beholds all creatures." The Avestan Mithra has 10,000 eyes, high, strong, sleepless and ever awake. The Persian god Ahura Mazda is sometimes said to have only one eye, at others to see everything with his eyes, the sun, moon and stars.

In all their actions, and in their position during sleep, the Subbas must turn towards the Pole Star, which fixes the spot where Avather dwells, and therefore the direction of Olmidanhuro, their heaven. The corpse of a Subba is laid out head to south and feet to north, so that the dead may have the Pole Star before his eyes and he is buried in the same way. In one of their legends (which they share with the Moslems) Solomon obtains access to the heavenly city through a hidden door in the centre of the wall facing the Pole Star. Here then we have a community who, while worshipping that star, are also Baptists who are held to continue the traditions of St. John, and to worship him also as *Yahio*. Their religion was one of those tolerated by Mohammed on paying tribute, and Sale says "travellers commonly call them Christians of St. John's." Of course, a large proportion of the Mohammedan Arabs were Sabeans in their worship. Siouffi, a French vice-consul at Mussul, said the name of Subbas is given to them by their Christian and Moslem neighbours, but they call themselves Mandoyo, "ancients." In 1875, there were about 4,000 of these Subbas or Mandoyo near Basrah, where Turkey joins Persia; those of Shushtar (the ancient Susa) are looked up to by the rest as being better educated in religious and other ways.

None of them till the ground, but they are chiefly highly skilled goldsmiths and joiners: a few are blacksmiths, and a few traders. Norberg's Codex said their name came from "Mando d'hhai," living word.

O'Neill also quotes a remarkable passage on this subject in the Koran (vi. 77): "And when the night overshadowed Abraham, he saw a star, and he said 'This is my Lord,' but when it set he said 'I like not gods that set.' And when he saw the moon rising he said 'This is my Lord'; but when he saw it set he said 'Verily if my Lord direct me not I shall become of the people that go astray.' And when he saw the sun rising he said 'This is my Lord, this is the

greatest.' But when it set he said 'Verily I direct my face unto Him who hath created the heavens and the earth.'" Now the Pole Star and the Bears and other Polar constellations do *not* set in Arabic latitudes. The commentators say therefore that Abraham's youthful religion was the Sabean, which consisted chiefly in worshipping the heavenly bodies, but especially the Pole Star.

The Sabeans held the belief, as do the modern Subbas, that at the four cardinal points, guarded by four angels, are buried the four *Shambube*, the principles of the winds, and that if these were suffered to escape the world would be overturned. From this O'Neill traces the archaic origin of the square, that chief jewel of Freemasonry, and the oldest symbol of Deity. He points out that these four corners exactly accord with the Chinese absolute conception of a square earth, and a square altar of earth, while that of the heavens is round. Here again we get the source of the Egyptian belief in the Four Lords of the Four Angles of the heavens, and a reason for the antiquity of that sacred Hindu symbol of Deity, the Swastika.

The Chinese north is the point "over which the Pole Star stands," while the three other points are referred to the sun : east where he rises, south where he rests, west where he sets. The Emperor when officiating at the round altar of heaven faced the north, and the Taoists turn towards the same point when addressing the first person of their Trinity. The Sabeans, the worshippers of the *Saba*, the Host of Heaven, believed in one God, and alleged many reasons for His Unity, says Jervis ; but they also paid adoration to the stars, or the angels or intelligences which they supposed resided in them and governed the world under the Supreme Deity. "They go on a pilgrimage to a place near the city of Hauran in Mesopotamia, where great numbers of them dwell." They derived their religion from Seth, and, according to Hyde, "those of Mount Lebanon have so high a veneration for him that they lay more stress on an oath made in his name than on one made on the name of God, *Wa Sheyth*, 'by Seth' being their most solemn oath." They paid special adoration to the seven planets : hence we have Balaam, in following the old Sabean, Chaldean and ancient Arab form of

worship, erecting seven altars, and offering on them seven oxen and seven rams. This same worship of "the Seven" continues among the Sabeans of the desert, says Dunlap, and is seen in the Desert-Christian religion of the Nazarenes of the Jordan.[1]

According to Wetzstein[2] the ancient Sabeans possessed the "secret of providing those glowing regions with water, a secret which has perished with them." He refers to Plutarch who says (de Iside, lii.) "In the sun's circuit, called the search for Osiris, they go round the temple seven times, the goddess desiring greatly the water of winter. And they go round just so many times because the sun with the seventh month completes the passage from the winter to the summer solstice." Many of the houses now standing in the Hauran are estimated by Jervis to have been the dwellings of the old inhabitants of Basan, and many of the cities of the Hauran have names which cities of Basan bore in the earliest times. An Arab historian of the tenth century, Hamzah Issfahani, remarks that what is left of the Chaldeans is now in the two cities Harran and Roha, and that in the time of el-Maimun they gave up the name Chaldeans, and took the name of Sabeans, or Chaldean Harranites. Another Arab writer classifies Baylonians, Chaldeans, Nabatheans, and Syrians together as all descendants of the Sabeans.

According to Jervis,[3] the Nabatheans inhabited the southern foot of Mount Libanus, and, like the Jews, were hostile to the Syrians, whose country "was repeatedly overrun by Nabatheans and Sabeans," thus drawing a distinction between the two peoples. "Like John the Baptist," he goes on, "and the Nazarenes, their guests or neighbours, they drank no wine, and denied themselves many things." The Codex Nazaræus (i. 5), says that the Nabatheans were the teachers of the Ebionites, and afterwards took their name. Jost (i. 411–14) says that "Christianity created for the Essene doctrines a stronger sympathy and produced an Ebionite tendency, in which so-called Gnosis shaped itself entirely as a spiritual science called for by the expounding of the law.

[1] S. F. Dunlap, *Sod, the Son of the Man*, p. 8.
[2] Wetzstein, *Reiseberich uber Hauran*, pp. 37 ff.
[3] Jervis, *Genesis*, p. 382.

The altogether mystic colouring of Christianity harmonized with the Essene rules of life and opinions, and it is not improbable that Jesus and the Baptist John were initiated into the Essene mysteries, to which Christianity may be indebted for many a form of expression; as indeed the community of Therapeutæ, an offspring of the Essene Order, soon belonged wholly to Christianity. Thus gradually distinct communities formed themselves. History names them, now Nazarenes, now, with a slight distinction no longer known to us, Ebionites. Irenæus (i. 26) says that "the Ebionites, as Sabeans, agreed that God created the world, while worshipping the stars. Their festivals were appointed for the days when the exaltations of the planets occur, the greatest taking place on the day when the sun enter Aries, with them the first day of the year, when they put on their Sun-day clothes. They celebrate the festival of every planet in a chapel dedicated to him, and derive their religion from Noah himself."

The Sabeans say of Adam that when he quitted the country adjacent to India for the confines of Babel, he carried with him many wonderful things, amongst which were one tree, whose branches, leaves and flowers were all of gold; another all of emerald; also two of the leaves of a third tree, so verdant that the fire could not consume its leaves, and so large as to cover up ten thousand men of equal stature with Adam. This legend, according to Dr. Kenealy, in his Book of God, may be taken to refer to some ancient book, of which the authorship was referred to Adam. This sacred book of the Sabeans is mentioned by Maimonides, who calls it the "Book of Thammuz," or *The Hidden One*. They had other books, according to the same writer, called *Tam-Tam*, or the "Book of the Sun"; the book *Hassearab*; and the "Book of the Messenger Hermes." The Sabeans also worshipped twelve Messiahs, who would appear to be identical with the twelve Imaums, or Sacred Sheiks of ancient Arabia, commemorated also, according to the Nazarenes, by the sending forth of the Twelve Apostles.

Writing on this subject of twelve Messengers, or Messiahs, Kenealy, in his Book of God, and carrying out his own idea of six hundred year cycles, considers the first Messenger

was Adam, whose date he gives as A.M. 3000; the second, Enoch, 3500; the third, Fo-hi, 4200; the fourth, Brigoo, of the Druids, Brahm of the Hindus, and Buddha, 4800; the fifth, Zaratusht or Zoroaster, 5400; the sixth, Thoth, 6000; the seventh, Amosis, or Moses, 6600; the eighth, Lao-Tseu, the great Chinese Teacher, 7200; the ninth, Jesus of Nazareth, 7800; the tenth, Mohammed, 8400; the eleventh, Genghis Khan, 9000 and Kenealy apparently estimated that as the twelfth cycle was concurrent with his own writings, he himself might, modestly, assume that he was the Twelfth Messenger. The Nabatheans were followers of St. John the Baptist in Lebanon, and the books of this sect are yet existing in Syria. Marcion, who left Rome about A.D. 140, would seem to have followed the Gospel of St. Luke. Eusebius, St. Jerome and Epiphanius have stated that these sects were branches of the Essenes, and Jones, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, says there is no doubt that several of the sects, which were eventually classed as Gnostic by the church of Rome, really proceeded from the Essenes.

Irenæus gives an account of the initiation ceremony of the Marcians, which, however, the sect repudiated, in which there would appear to be considerable resemblance to the rites of the modern Dervish sects. He says there is first a baptismal service, with an invocation to light, spirit and life, followed by one to "angelic redemption," by which the Neophyte became united to his Angel, concluding with a formula of "restitution," or unity to the super-celestial power, to which the Neophyte responded in declaring his redemption by the name Iao.

CHAPTER V

THE GNOSTICS AND THE MANICHEANS, AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE ORDER OF KNIGHTS TEMPLARS

THE general name " Gnostics " is used to designate several widely different sects, which sprang up in the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, almost simultaneously with the first planting of Christianity. Their doctrines are dealt with in a very complete manner by King, whose exhaustive work is a text-book on the subject.[1] From this is taken the following summary.

The term " Gnosticism " is derived from the Greek *Gnōsis*, knowledge, a word specially employed from the first dawn of religious inquiry to designate the science of things divine. Thus Pythagoras, according to Diogenes Laertius, called the transcendental portion of his philosophy, *Gnōsis ton ontōn*, the knowledge of things that *are*. And in later times Gnosis was the name given to what Porphry calls the Antique or Oriental Philosophy to distinguish it from the Grecian systems. But the term was first used (as Matter on good grounds conjectures) in its ultimate sense of *supernal* and *celestial* knowledge, by the Jewish philosophers of the celebrated Alexandrian school. A very characteristic production of this Jewish Gnosis has come down to our times in the Book of Enoch,[2] of which the main object is to make known the description of the heavenly bodies, and their correct names, as revealed to the Patriarch by the angel Uriel. This profession betrays, of itself, the Magian source from which the inspiration was derived.

Gnosticism therefore cannot receive a better definition

[1] *The Gnostics and their Remains.* London, 1864.
[2] See quotations from this book in the Appendix.

than in that dictum of the sect first and specially calling itself "Gnostics," the *Naaseni* (translated by the Greeks into "Ophites,") viz., "The beginning of perfection is the knowledge of man, but absolute perfection is the knowledge of God." The entire system may be thus described. Gnosticism professes to teach the knowledge of God and of man, of the Being and Providence of the former, and of the creation and destiny of the latter. While the ignorant and superstitious were degrading the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made with hands, and were changing "the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator," the ancient Gnostics held purer and truer ideas. And when these corrupted and idolatrous forms of religion and worship became established, and were popularly regarded as true and real in themselves, the "Gnostics" held, and secretly taught, an *esoteric* theology of which the popular creed of multitudes of deities, with its whole ritual of sacrifice and worship, was but the exoteric form. Hence all the mysteries which almost all, if not all, the heathen religions possessed. Those initiated into these mysteries, whilst they carefully maintained and encouraged the gorgeous worship, sacrifices, and processions of the national religion, and even openly taught polytheism, and the efficacy of the public rites, yet secretly held something very different—at the first, probably, a purer creed, but in course of time, like the exoteric form, degenerating. The progress of declination differed according to race, or habit of thought: in the East it tended to superstition, in the West (as we learn from the writings of Cicero) to pure atheism, a denial of Providence. This system was adopted likewise by the Jews, but with this great difference, that it was super-induced upon and applied to a pre-existent religion: whereas in the other Oriental religions, the external was added to the esoteric, and developed out of it. In the Oriental systems, the external was the sensuous expression of a hidden meaning; in the Jewish, the hidden meaning was drawn out of pre-existing external laws and ritual; in the former the esoteric alone was claimed as Divine, in the latter it was the exoteric which was a matter of revelation. To remedy this seeming defect, the Kabalists,

or teachers of the "Hidden Doctrine," invented the existence of a secret tradition, orally handed down from the time of Moses. We may, of course, reject this assertion, and affirm that the Jews learnt the idea of a Hidden Wisdom, underlying the Mosaic Law, from their intercourse with the Eastern nations during the Babylonian captivity; and we may further be assured that the origin of this Secret Widom is India. Perhaps we shall be more exact if we say that the Jews learnt from their intercourse with Eastern nations to investigate the external Divine Law, for the purpose of discovering its hidden meaning. The heathen Gnostics, in fact, collected a Gnosis from every quarter, accepted all religious systems as partly true, and extracted from each what harmonized with their ideas. They strove for the knowledge of God, says the great authority on the Gnostics, G. R. S. Mead:[1] "The science of realities, the gnosis of the things-that-are; wisdom was their goal; the holy things of life their study. They were called by many names by those who subsequently haled them from their hidden retreats to ridicule their efforts and anathematize their doctrines, and one of the names, which they used for themselves, custom has selected to be their present general title. They are now generally referred to in Church history as the Gnostics, those whose goal was the Gnosis—if indeed that be the right meaning; for one of their earliest existing documents expressly declares that Gnosis is not the end—it is the beginning of the path, the end is God—and hence the Gnostics would be those who used the Gnosis as the means to set their feet upon the Way to God."

It will be seen from the above description of the Gnostics how much they had in common with the ancient sects in the Lebanon, while their "Inner Mystery," the continuous search for the "Hidden Wisdom," gives us more than a clue as to the Masonic searches for various "lost words."

The Gnostics attached great value to the numbers five and seven, and in the "Pistis-Sophia," one of their very interesting books, of which the authorship is attributed to St. Philip the Apostle, we find references to "Five Marks," "Five Trees," "Seven Vowels," and "Seven Amens."

[1] *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, p. 32. London, 1906.

Manicheism is a development of the Indian source of Gnosticism alluded to above, and is so called from Manes, a Persian slave and scholar, who gave to certain Magian notions a definite shape, and constructed, says King, a system " with such skill that it spread not merely over the East, but throughout Europe. In the latter region its importance is evinced by the fact (mentioned incidentally by Ammianus), that Constantine himself, before finally changing his religion, following the Apostolic precept, 'Try all things, hold fast that which is good,' carefully studied the Manichean system under the guidance of the learned Musonianus, whom we must suppose to have been a great doctor of the sect." Another follower of Gnosticism before accepting the Christian faith was St. Augustine, who has left on record what he found to be the weakness and fallacies of the Manichean tenets.

In Justinian's time a fierce persecution of the Manicheans took place in Syria, and in the fifth century they were also attacked. They reappeared, however, in Asia Minor in the seventh century as Paulicians; and at Tephrice, near Trebizond, they held the mountains till 880 A.D., then Basil the Macedonian drove them out. In the middle of the eighth century Constantine Copronymus transplanted a colony of Armenian Paulicians to Thrace, where they were increased by others from the valleys of the Caucasus in the tenth century. They there converted the Bulgarians, and spread to Sicily, Rome, Milan, and France. In the twelfth century the Albigenses in France derived their dogmas from these heretics, and no doubt also from the Gnosticism of the Manichean Priscillian (in the fourth century), Bishop of Avila, in Spain. Gnosticism had found its way to Gaul in the time of Irenæus, and Jerome speaks of the heresy of the great Gnostic Basilides, in Spain. Thus, side by side with the orthodoxy of Greek and Latin Churches, the great Manichean system, combining Christianity, Buddhism and Mazdean ideas in one syncretic doctrine, flourished in the Byzantine age from Persia to Spain, in spite of persecution by Arian and Orthodox emperors alike.[1]

That Gnosticism, under its Manichean form, reached

[1] See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. liv.

Britain is evidenced by numerous discoveries, especially in Wales, of ancient medallions engraved, often very rudely, with Gnostic devices. And the tenets of Manicheism long prevailed amongst the Albigenses, who in the twelfth century were so ruthlessly exterminated by the general Almeida by order of Francois I.

These European Manicheans were in large part the disciples, under the name of Paulicians, of Constantinus Sylvanus, a native of Samosata, who in the middle of the seventh century propounded a somewhat curious mixture of the doctrines of St. Paul with those of Zoroaster, intermingled with a larger proportion of the former than Manes had thought fit to introduce in his own theosophy. The new teacher easily united into one church the remnants of the old Gnostics, especially the Manicheans of Armenia, and the still unconverted Zoroastrians of Pontus and Cappadocia. They spread into what is now Bulgaria, and from thence diffused their doctrines into Italy, and so, as we have seen, into the South of France.

The Manicheans were divided into classes or grades. The first grade were known as Disciples, and were more or less probationers. The second grade were known as Auditors, who were permitted to hear the writings of Manes read, and interpreted in a mystical form. The third grade were the Perfect, or Elect, who were the priestly order of the sect. From these last were chosen the Magistri, or Council, who were twelve in number, as in the Culdee system, with a thirteenth as President. In common with other sects professing Gnostic tenets they had secret forms of recognition, three in number, described by St. Augustine as the word, the grip, and the breast.

Manichean doctrines were thus being diffused during the period when the Templars were at the height of their prosperity and power, and King [1] devotes several pages of his work to a consideration of the close resemblance between these Orders.

Gnosticism, he points out, in one shape or another, was still surviving on the very headquarters of the Order, among their closest allies or enemies, the mountaineers of Syria.

[1] *Gnostics and their Remains*, pp. 410 ff.

The Templar Order "had been modelled after an original, the last to be looked for according to modern views, for Von Hammer has here been successful in demonstrating that its constitution is a servile copy of that of the detested 'Assassins.' The statutes of the latter prove the fact beyond all gainsaying; they were found upon the captives of their capital, Alamoot, by the Mogul, Halakoo, in the year 1335, when, by a most singular coincidence, Caliph and Pope were busied in exterminating the model and the copy in the East and West, at one and the same time." From these documents were verified the "Eight Degrees of Initiation" as established by Hassan, the first Grand Master, or "Prince of the Mountain." These degrees, probably suggested by the ancient Mithraic tests, were :—

I. The Trial of Knowledge.
II. The Trial of Persuasiveness; i.e. the talent for proselytism.
III. Denial of the Truth of the Koran, and of all other sacred scriptures.
IV. The Trial of Silent and Perfect Obedience.
V. The Disclosure of the Names of the Great Brothers of the Order, royal, sacerdotal, and patrician, *in all parts of the world.*
VI. The Confirmation of all the preceding Steps of Knowledge.
VII. The Allegorical Interpretation of the Koran, and of all other Scriptures. In this Order the divinity of all founders of religious systems was alike denied. Religion was shown to be a mere *step to knowledge,* its narratives to be merely allegorical, and exhibiting the progress of civil society: thus Man's Fall signified political slavery; Redemption his restoration to liberty and equality.
VIII. That all actions were indifferent, provided only they were done for the good of the Order, there being no such thing, absolutely, as vice or virtue.

It will be seen, says Von Hammer, that the principle

running through these " Degrees " is identical with that pervading the main counts in the Articles of Accusation brought against the Templars. The same author, in his *History of the Assassins,* also shows that the organization of the Templars was exactly modelled upon that of the Assassins, and thus confronts the several degrees in each of the two Orders.

DEGREES OF THE ASSASSINS

I. The Grand Master, or Prince of the Mountain.
II. The Dais-al-Kabir, or three great viceroys under him.
III. The Dais, or provincial masters.
IV. The Refek, or chaplains.
V. The Lazik, or military body.
VI. The Fedavee, or death-devoted.
VII. The Batinee, or secret brethren, i.e. those affiliated to the Order.

DEGREES OF THE TEMPLARS

I. The Grand Master.
II. The Three Grand Priors.
III. The Provincial Prior.
IV. The Chaplains.
V. The Knights.
VI. The Esquires.
VII. The Serving Brethren.
VIII. The Danato and Obligati.
IX. The Affiliati.

The " Donati " and " Obligati " were sworn, in return for the protection afforded to them by the Order, to leave to it all their property at their deaths, and consequently to refrain from having offspring, or even to stand sponsors to the children of others. If married at the time of joining the Order, they were bound to put away their wives. Infraction of the vow was punished by perpetual imprisonment. The " Affiliati " had, probably, nothing to do with the secrets of the Order ; they merely, in return for a certain

sum paid down, received their daily maintenance (their commons), out of the corporate fund ; such an arrangement being a simple anticipation of the principle of life annuities, and admirably adapted to the requirements of those barbarous times.

Waite, an enthusiastic exponent of the high place taken in the religious aspect of Masonry by the ritual of the Knights Templar Degree, without allowing himself to be committed to any statement which the ordinary reader might construe into a definite opinion, has many references in his *Secret Tradition in Freemasonry* to the influence from the East, which is to be distinctly traced in the Templar rites. Apparently, he attributes this in some measure to the Essenes, or, at least, he does not controvert such a statement by others.

The tradition preserved among the Druses, that the present seat of their Grand Master is Europe, and that they have members of their faith existing at the present day, both in England and Scotland, tallies curiously enough with Von Hammer's theory about the close relationship that existed between the Templars and the Ismaeli, or Assassins, the actual progenitors of the Druses.

" The influence of the Crusades, and their results upon the mind and life of mediæval Europe cannot possibly be exaggerated. The true masters of the Western barbarians in philosophy, science, and many of the arts, were the Arabs, firstly those of Syria, later those of Spain. Together with their learning they communicated other ideas, far different from those originally contemplated by their pupils. Nevertheless, the connection between their science and their secret creed, was so intimate that, in reality, no other result was to be looked for. So much of primitive Gnosticism, before its admixture with Christianity, was based upon Magism, that is, upon astrological ideas, as to make it often difficult to determine whether a Gnostic monument involves a religious notion, or is merely a sidereal talisman." [1]

The strange ceremonies observed on the admission of neophytes into the various secret societies that flourished under the Lower Empire and in the Middle Ages are all of

[1] King, *The Gnostics and their Remains*, p. 414.

them no more than faint traditions of the penances, or "Twelve Tortures," that purchased admission into the Cave of Mithras. How widely diffused were these *Mithraici*, especially in the West, is attested by the innumerable tablets, altars, and inscriptions still remaining in Germany, France, and this country. The religion of Mithras was so readily embraced, and flourished so extensively among all the Celtic races, in consequence of its analogy to the previously dominant Druidical religion, an affinity which had been observed by Pliny[1] and a hundred years before him by Cæsar,[2] both of whom found that the subjects of study amongst the Druids were literally those of the Magian Gnosis. Druidism expressly taught the eternal existence of the Two Principles, the final triumph of Good, and the Renovation of all things. A most valuable fragment of early Druidical teaching has been preserved for us by Plutarch, in his strange essay "On the Face in the Moon," by the title of the *Doctrine of the Sons of Saturn*, which is full of Gnostic ideas, those of Manes, for instance, and even of Gnostic expressions.

[1] Nat. Hist. xxx, 4.

[2] *Bell. Gall.*, vi. 13.

CHAPTER VI

OTHER GNOSTIC SECTS: THE OPHITES, BASILIDEANS, AND FOLLOWERS OF SIMON MAGUS

The Ophites, according to Clemens Alexandrinus, were founded by one Eucrates at the beginning of the Christian era, and were a well-organized fraternity early in the second century. Their doctrine, though to some extent corresponding with that of the Mandaites, or followers of John the Baptist, was very Osirian, or Serapian, with Semitic names for the Coptic ones. Hippolytus, the Greek historian, styles them: " The Naaseni who specially call themselves Gnostics. But inasmuch as this deception of theirs is multiform and has many heads (a play upon their name of serpent-followers), like the hydra of fable, if I smite all the heads at once with the wand of Truth, I shall destroy the whole serpent, for all the other sects differ but little from this one in essentials." Their strange-sounding title, " Naaseni," " Followers of the Naas," the only way in which the Greek, from its want of aspirate letters could write the Hebrew word *Nachash,* " Serpent," was literally rendered by " Ophites," the name which has ever since served to designate them. They first assumed a definite existence about the same time as the Basilideans, in the second century.

Like other Gnostics, they rejected the Old Testament altogether as the work of a subordinate divinity, and containing nothing of their revealed *Sophia*, or Divine Wisdom, and they held that the New Testament, although originally of higher authority, had been so corrupted by the interpolations of the Apostles as to have lost all value as a revelation of Divine truth. They drew the chief supports of their tenets out of the various " Testaments " and similar books

then current, and ascribed to the Patriarchs and the most ancient Prophets, as, for example, the Book of Seth.

The primary article of their doctrine was the Emanation of all things from the One Supreme, long utterly unknown to mankind, and at last only revealed to a very small number capable of receiving such enlightenment. Hence He is named *Bythos*, " Profundity," to express His unfathomable, inscrutable nature. Following the Zoroastrian and Kabalistic nomenclature they also designated Him as the " Fountain of Light," and " The Primal Man," giving for the reason of the latter title that " Man was created after the Image of God," which therefore proved the nature of the prototype. The primitive Ophites, such as the Naaseni, regarded their serpent " The Naas " as identical with Christ, according to Epiphanius employing a living tame serpent to encircle and consecrate the loaves that were to be eaten at the Eucharistic supper. To establish the identity of their Ophis with the Saviour of Mankind, reference was made to the words of St. John: " For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." This proves that the section of the Ophites which later on regarded the serpent as evil by its nature must have been led away from the primitive doctrine of their sect by the prevailing Zoroastrian and Jewish notions upon that subject.

In common with the Basilideans, they called their Supreme Deity " Abraxas," and attributed miraculous powers to the arrangement in the form of a triangle of the form of that name, Abracadabra.

The Ophites preserved the celebration of both the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries, and are believed to have had three grades, with separate initiatory rites for each.

The Basilideans took their name from Basilides of Alexandria, a disciple of Menander, a pupil of Simon Magus. This system had three grades, the material, intellectual, and spiritual. Two allegorical statues, a male and a female, had a prominent part in their religious ceremonies. As in the Mysteries, a quinquennial silence was exacted from their disciples. Their doctrine, whilst in many points strongly resembling that of the Ophites, also ran on the lines of Kabalism with a succession of Æons, Emanations and Sephiroth, over

which an Archon, or Angelic-prince, presided. They also taught that Simon of Cyrene took the place of Jesus at the Crucifixion. Basilides was succeeded as head of the sect by his son Isidorus, and a tradition says that Matthias the Apostle communicated to these two some secret discourses which, being specially instructed, he had heard from the Saviour.

Irenæus, who was a contemporary of Basilides, thus describes his doctrines :—

" Basilides, in order to invent something more refined and plausible in the Gnostic speculative philosophy, pushed his investigations even into the Infinite. He asserted that God, the uncreated eternal Father, first brought forth *Nous*, or Mind :[1] and Mind, the *Logos*, Word ; this in turn, *Phronesis*, Intelligence ; whence came forth *Sophia*, Wisdom, and *Dynamis*, Strength." Irenæus understands Basilides as making a Quinternion of Beings, or Personal Intelligences *external* to the Godhead ; but Bellermann, with more reason, takes them as signifying personified attributes of the *Supreme forms* of his working internally and externally. According to this explanation,[2] says King, Basilides would only have borrowed his system from the Kabala ; it is, however, equally likely that he drew the whole from a much more distant source, and that his " Uncreated " and " Quinternion " stand in truth for the *First* Buddha and the successive *five*.

" When the Uncreated Eternal Father beheld the corruption of mankind," continues Irenæus, " He sent His first-born, Nous, into the world in the form of Christ, for the redeeming of all that believe in Him out of the power of those who fabricated the world—namely the Demiurgius and his six sons, the Planetary Genii. Nous appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles. This Christ did not die in person, but Simon the Cyrenian, to whom He lent His bodily form, suffered in His stead, inasmuch as the Divine Power, the Nous of the Eternal Father, is not corporeal, and therefore cannot die. Whoso therefore maintains that Christ has died is still the bondman of *Ignorance*, but

[1] Compare the Religious Creed of the Druses, in chap. xxiii.

[2] *Gnostics and their Remains*, p. 261.

whoso denies the same, he is a freeman, and hath understood the *purpose* of the Father."

From this tenet the Basilideans got the opprobrious title of the "Illusionists." There is in all this a remarkable similarity to the desire of the Buddhist, Brahmin, and Mohammedan to preserve the dignity of the Father by refusing to believe in the human sufferings of the Son.

Madam Blavatsky is at issue with Irenæus as to the doctrines of the Ophites, and considers he had perhaps good reasons for disfiguring them. Describing the systems according to an old diagram preserved among some Copts and the Druses of Mount Lebanon she says:—[1]

"The Gnostic Ophites taught the doctrine of Emanations, so hateful to the defenders of the unity in the Trinity, and *vice versa*. The Unknown Deity with them had *no name*; but his first female emanation was called Bythos or Depth. It answered to the Shekinah of the Kabalists, the 'Veil' which conceals the 'Wisdom' in the *cranium* of the highest of the *three* heads. As the Pythagorean Monad, this *nameless* Wisdom was the *Source* of Light, and *Ennoia* or *Mind*, is Light itself. The latter was also called the 'Primitive Man,' like the Adam Kadmon, or ancient Adam of the *Kabala*. Indeed, if man was created after his likeness and in the image of God, then this God was like his creature in shape and figure—hence he is the 'Primitive Man.' The first Manu, the one evolved from Swayambhuva, 'he who exists unrevealed in his own glory,' is also, in one sense, the primitive man, with the Hindus."

Thus the "nameless and the unrevealed," Bythos, his female reflection, and Ennoia, the revealed mind proceeding from both, or their Son, are the counterparts of the Chaldean first triad as well as those of the Brahamic Trimurti.

Though he is termed the "Primitive Man," Ennoia, who is like the Egyptian Pymander, the "Power of the Thought Divine," the first intelligible manifestation of the Divine Spirit in material form, is like the "Only-Begotten" Son of the "Unknown Father," of all other nations. He is the emblem of the first appearance of the Divine Presence

[1] *Isis Unveiled*, pp. 169 ff.

in His own works of creation, tangible and visible, and therefore comprehensible. As neither the male nor female principle, blended into the idea of a double-sexed Deity in ancient conceptions, could be comprehended by an ordinary human intellect, the theology of every people had to create for its religion a Logos, or manifested word, in some shape or other. With the Ophites and other Gnostics who took their models direct from more ancient originals, the unrevealed Bythos and her male counterpart produce Ennoia, and the three in their turn produce Sophia, thus completing the Tetraktya, from which will emanate Christos, the very essence of the Father Spirit.

The only difference between the Ophite cosmogony and that of the St. John Nazarenes is a change of names. We find equally an identical system in the *Kabala*, the Book of Mystery (*Liber Mysterii*). All the three systems, especially that of the Kabalists and the Nazarenes, which were the *models* for the Ophite Cosmogony, belong to the pure Oriental Gnosticism. The Codex Nazaræus opens with: "The Supreme King of Light, Mano, the great first one," etc., the latter being the emanation of Ferho—the unknown, formless LIFE. He is the chief of the Æons, from whom proceed (or shoot forth) five refulgent rays of Divine light. Mano is *Rex Lucis*, the Bythos-Ennoia of the Ophites.

The followers of Simon Magus, though considered last, are estimated by Hippolytus to have had great influence upon the tenets of the two sects described above. He says: "It is here my intention to exhibit the system of Simon Magus, a native of Gitteh, in Samaria, and I will prove that from him all those that come after have derived the elements of their doctrine, and impudently attempted the same things under different appellations. This Simon was skilled in magic, and had imposed upon great numbers, partly by practising the art of Thrasymedes after the manner which I have already exposed (in the Book upon Magicians), and partly by miracle working through the agency of demons. He attempted to set up for a god, being a thorough impostor and altogether unscrupulous and daring; for he was that one whom the Apostles confuted, as is recorded in the Acts.

"Simon speaks, when interpreting the Law of Moses,

in an impudent and fraudulent fashion, for whenever Moses says 'Our God is a burning and consuming fire,' Simon, taking what Moses has said in a false sense, maintains that *Fire* is the Principle of all things. He designates the Principle of all things 'Boundless Power' in the following words: 'This is the Book of the Declaration of the Voice, and of the Name, from the inspiration of the Great, the Boundless Power. Wherefore the same is sealed, hidden, wrapped up, stored in the dwelling wherein the Root of all things is established.' This *dwelling*, he says, signifies *Man* here below, who is born of blood, and also signifies that there dwells within him a 'Boundless Power' which he asserts is the Root of all things. But this Boundless Power (or Fire according to Simon) is not a simple substance in the same way as most people who call the Elements 'simple' account Fire likewise as simple: on the contrary, he maintains that the nature of Fire is, as it were, *double*; and of this double number he terms one part the *Insensible*, the other the *Visible*; asserting that the insensible are contained within the visible parts of the Fire, and that the visible parts are generated by the invisible. (This is the same thing that Aristotle expresses by his 'Force' and 'Energy,' and Plato by his 'Intelligible' and 'Sensible.')

"The commencement of the creation of the world was in this wise, according to Simon: six 'Radicals' (lit. Roots), the First Principles of the beginning of Creation, were taken by the Begotten-one out of the Principle of that Fire; for he asserts that these Six Radicals emanated by *pairs* out of the Fire. These Six Radicals he names 'Mind and Intelligence, Voice and Name, Reason and Thought.' And there exists in these Radicals taken together the whole of the 'Boundless Power,' but existing in *potentiality*, not in *activity*. Now of these Six Powers, and of the Seventh which goes along with them, the *First Thought* Simon terms 'Mind and Intellect,' 'Heaven and Earth,' teaching that the one, of the male sex, looks down upon and takes care of his consort; while the Earth below receives from Heaven the 'Intellect' and fruits of the same nature with the Earth, which are poured down from above. For this cause, says Simon, the Word, often looking down upon the things that spring out of Mind and Intellect, says 'Hear, O Heavens, and receive

with thine ears, O Earth! for the Lord hath spoken: I have begotten and brought up sons, but they have despised me. He that saith this is the *Seventh Power,* 'He who standeth, hath stood, and shall stand'; for He is the author of those good things which Moses commended, saying that they were very good.

"Voice and Name are the Sun and Moon; Reason and Thought are Air and Water. But with all of these is mingled and combined that Boundless Power, 'He who standeth,' as already mentioned."

This teaching of a pronounced Male and Female principle, helped by the worship paid to the two pillars representing those principles, and also largely provoked into gross immorality by Simon's own licentious conduct with a harlot of Tyre named Helena, to whom he attributed a divine origin, is undoubtedly the source of the allegations of immoral rites and drunken orgies ascribed to other secret sects in Syria, and for this reason I have mentioned it here. I conclude with a few more words quoted from the same author, Hippolytus:—

"The disciples, therefore, of this Simon practise magic arts and incantation, and make philtres and seductive spells; they likewise send the so-called 'dream-bringing demons' to trouble whomsoever they choose. They likewise practise the rites of the gods named *Paredroi,* the 'Assessors'; they have also an image of Simon, in the guise of Jupiter, and likewise one of Helena, in the figure of Minerva; and these they worship, calling one 'The Master' the other 'The Mistress.'"

No reference seems made by any historian of this sect to any special rites of initiation practised by them.

A few words of Gibbon will suitably close this chapter: "The sects of Egypt and Syria enjoyed a free toleration under the shadow of the Arabian Caliphs, and therefore may reasonably be supposed to have maintained their peculiar notions and observances down to the time of the Crusades. Of such protracted existence we have the most convincing proof at the present day in the numerous sect, the Mandaites, or Nazarenes, of the Shat-el-Arab, and Bassora; veritable Gnostics, holding a creed, the true image of that of Manes, in their Book of Adam; and detested by their Christian and Moslem neighbours alike."

CHAPTER VII

THE SCHIITE SECTS: SUFEISM AND THE DERVISH ORDERS

SCARCELY had Islamism thrown out some roots in the places formerly subject to the empire of the Sassanides, and the religion of the Magians, than a schism, political and religious, lit up there the torch of fanaticism.[1] When the faith of Islam was forced upon the Persian nation by the sanguinary Omar, it was declared by the conqueror, that all who did not receive it with implicit obedience should be put to the sword. Such a summary process of conversion left the real tenets of the great majority of the nation unaltered; from old associations, they began to regard the Imaums, or chiefs of the faith, as Bodhisatwas; and, as we shall have occasion to notice hereafter, this principle pervades all the Schiite sects; the chief difference between them being as to the number of incarnations. The Schiite notion of an Imaum is precisely the same as that which the Thibetians form of their Grand Llama, and the Burmese of their Bodhisatwas.[2]

The dogma of the union of the divinity to Ali and the Imaums of his race[3] " owed its origin, if I am not mistaken, to the ancient system of the Parsees. It is also to the ancient theology of the people of Eastern Asia that we must refer the origin of the belief in the transmigration of souls, and perhaps the study of the books of the Grecian philosophers contributed to strengthen and extend this opinion among the Mussulmans."

The Sufees are a secret society of Persian mystic philosophers and ascetics, whose original religion may have

[1] De Sacy, *Religion of the Druses*, Introd. p. 27.

[2] Taylor, *History of Mohammedanism*, p. 152. A separate chapter later is devoted to this resemblance.

[3] De Sacy, Introd. p. 31.

been that of the Chaldeans, or Sabeans, who believed in the unity of God, but adored the host of heaven (Tsaba), especially the seven planets, as representing Him. Zoroaster, the introducer of the Magian religion, or a section of it, taught the existence of two principles, Ormuzd and Ahriman, and, as light was with him a symbol of the former, the good spirit, he directed his followers to turn to the fire lighted on the altar, if worshipping in a temple, or to the sun if worshipping in the open air.

The modern Persians are Schiites, that is, Mussulmans who reject the *Sunnah*, or the code received by Mussulmans of Turkey and the West, as founded in the traditions of Mohammed, collected and commented upon by the four Orthodox directors. They also look upon the first three Caliphs as usurpers, and consider Ali as at least equal to Mohammed. But many look upon him as far superior. It is quite a common saying in Persia, " Though I do not believe Ali to be God, I believe that he is not far from being so." In all portraits of Him he is represented with His face covered, because, as they allege, the glory of His countenace is too bright for mortal eye to behold.

The Sufees, says Sir John Malcolm,[1] represent themselves as devoted to the search after truth, and incessantly occupied in adoring the Almighty, a union with whom they desire with all fervour of divine love. The Creator, according to their belief, is diffused over all creation. He exists everywhere, and in everything. They compare the emanations of his essence or spirit to the rays of the sun, which they conceive are continually darted forth and reabsorbed. It is for this reabsorption into the divine essence, to which their immortal part belongs, that they continually sigh. They believe that the soul of man, and the principle of life which exists through Nature, are not from God, but of God.

The Sufee doctrines are as old as Mohammed, and became general in Persia under a Sufee sheikh about A.D. 1499. The Sufee tenets allow a man to retain outward ceremonies in the first stage. They have four gradations, and secrets and mysteries for every gradation, which are never revealed to the profane.

[1] Malcolm, *Persia*, vol. ii, p. 269.

"Look in your own heart," says the Sufee, "for the Kingdom of God is within you." He who truly knows himself knows God, for the heart is a mirror in which every divine quality is reflected. But just as a steel mirror when coated with rust loses its power of reflection, so the inward spiritual sense, which Sufees call the eye of the heart, is blind to the celestial glory until the dark obstruction of the phenomenal self, with all its sensual contaminations, has been wholly cleared away. The clearance, if it is to be done effectively, must be the work of God, though it demands a certain inward co-operation on the part of man. "Whosoever shall strive for our sake, We will guide him in Our ways," says the Koran (xxix, 69). Action is false and vain, it is thought to proceed from one's self, but the enlightened mystic regards God as the real agent in every act, and therefore takes no credit for his good works, nor desires to be recompensed for them.

Both Moslem and Sufee declare that God is One, but the statement bears a different meaning in each instance. The Moslem means that God is unique in His essence, qualities, and acts; that He is absolutely unlike all other beings. The Sufi means that God is the One Real Being which underlies all phenomena.

Thus the Sufees conceive the universe to be a projected and reflected image of God. The divine light, streaming forth in a series of emanations, falls at last upon the darkness of not-being, every atom of which reflects some attribute of Deity. Man reflects all the attributes, the terrible as well as the beautiful, love and mercy as well as wrath and vengeance; he is the epitome of heaven and hell.

Ammian, in his history of Julian's Persian expedition, says that one day Hystaspes, as he was boldly penetrating into the unknown regions of Upper India, came upon a certain wooded solitude, the tranquil recesses of which were "occupied by those exalted sages, the Brachmanes or Shamans. Instructed by their teaching in the science of the motions of the world and of the heavenly bodies, and in pure religious rites, he transfused them into the creed of the Magi. The latter, coupling these doctrines with their own peculiar science of foretelling the future, have handed down the whole

through their descendants to succeeding ages." "It is from these descendants," writes Madam Blavatsky,[1] "that the Sufees, chiefly composed of Persians and Syrians, acquired their proficient knowledge in astrology, medicine, and the esoteric doctrine of the ages. We hold to the idea—which becomes self-evident when the Zoroastrian inbroglio is considered—that there were, even in the days of Darius, two distinct sacerdotal castes of Magi: the initiated, and those who were allowed to participate in the popular rites only. We see the same in the Eleusinian Mysteries. Belonging to every temple there were attached the 'Hierophants' of the *inner* sanctuary, and the secular clergy who were not even instructed in the Mysteries. It is against the absurdities and superstitions of the latter that Darius revolted, and 'crushed them,' for the inscription on his tomb shows that he was a 'Hierophant' and a Magian himself. It is also but the exoteric rites of this class of Magi which descended to posterity, for the great secrecy in which were preserved the 'Mysteries' of the true Chaldean Magi was *never* violated, however much guess-work may have been expended on them. The mysterious Druses of Mount Lebanon are the descendants of these ancient philosophers. Solitary Copts, earnest students scattered hither and thither throughout the sandy solitudes of Egypt, Arabia, Petræa, Palestine, and the impenetrable forests of Abyssinia, though rarely met with, may sometimes be seen. Many and various are the nationalities to which belong the disciples of that mysterious school, and many the side shoots of that one primitive stock. The secrecy preserved by these sub-lodges, as well as by the one and supreme great lodge, has ever been proportionate to the activity of religious persecutions: and now, in the face of the growing materialism, their very existence is becoming a mystery."

"The Sufee doctrine," says King,[2] "involved the grand idea of one universal creed which could be secretly held under any profession of an outward faith; and, in fact, took virtually the same view of religious systems as that in which the ancient philosophers had regarded such matters."

[1] *Isis Unveiled*, vol. ii. p. 306.
[2] *The Gnostics and their Remains*, p. 185.

Although the ordinary Sufee principles are professed generally by the higher grades among the Dervishes, some of the Orders hold doctrines more purely mystical, and others more purely pantheistic, than the rest. Of the more purely mystical, the Nakshibendi and Khalveti Orders are the chief representatives. The former was founded by Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, the latter by Ali, the third Caliph. The successful establishment of other communities having caused the extinction of the two original fraternities, they had remained unrepresented, the former until the thirteenth, and the latter until the fourteenth century, when Mohammed of Nakshibend and Omar Khalvet respectively founded Orders which assumed their names.[1] The rule observed by the Nakshibendi Dervishes is held to be in strict accordance with that instituted by Abu Bakr, and the members of this Order live in their own homes, and pursue their ordinary avocations, meeting only at stated times for the performance of religious exercises. This Order seems to have remained one of the most numerous and popular in the Turkish Empire.

The Order of the Khalvetis, although professing to be a revival of the primitive congregation of the Caliph Ali, practise a much more rigid austerity than was compatible with the rule originally observed of remaining in the world and fulfilling the ordinary duties of citizens. The members undertake to live much in retirement, and to devote a great part of their time to solitary contemplation.

The Order of the Bektashis was instituted in the fifteenth century by the Hadji Bektash, "Bektash the Pilgrim," who, according to Yarker,[2] received his "Mantle" from Ahmed Yesevee, who claimed descent from the father-in-law of Mohammed. He established a "Path," consisting of seven nominal, but four essential degrees, and a description of the initiation ceremonies is given in the next chapter. These degrees are magical in their nature, as they aim at establishing an affinity between the Aspirant and the Sheikh, from whom he is led, through the Founder, and the Prophet, to Allah.

This Order, in addition to its numerous adherents among

[1] Garnett, *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, p. 17.
[2] *Arcane Schools*, p. 188.

the Osmanlis, is said to include in its ranks some 80,000 Albanian Moslems. Bektash was one of the many learned men whom the munificence of the early Ottoman Princes attracted to Asia Minor from Khorassan, and Orchan is said to have attributed many of his victories to the presence in his army of this holy man. He built for him, at Sivas, a monastery and college, and sought his approval and blessing on every undertaking. And when he had enrolled that first fair young band of Christian boys which was destined to develop into "the strongest and fiercest instrument of imperial ambition ever devised upon earth,"[1] he led them to the abode of the saintly Sheikh, and begged of him to bestow upon them his blessing. With his arm, draped in the wide sleeve of his mantle, stretched over the head of a youth in the front rank, Hadgi Bektash thus addressed the Emir :—

"The troop which thou hast formed shall be called *Yeni Sheri*, (New Troop). Their faces shall be white and shining, their right arms strong, their sabres keen, and their arrows sharp. They shall be fortunate in battle, and never leave the field save as victors."[2]

The *Yeni Sheri*, or Janisseries, in consequence of this benediction, remained, until the massacre of their corps in 1826, closely incorporated with the Order founded by this famous Sheikh.[3] Other Orders of Dervishes, to whom we can only allude in passing, are the Rufai, or "Howling Dervishes," founded in the twelfth century; the Mevlevi, or "Dancing Dervishes," founded in the thirteenth century; and the Kalenderi, or "Kalender Dervishes," founded by a disciple of Sheikh Hadji Bektash, Kalender Yussuf-Andalusi. Expelled from his original Brotherhood on account of his overbearing temper and arrogant behaviour, Yussuf made unsuccessful attempts to gain admittance to the Mevlevi Order, and ended by establishing on his own authority a Brotherhood, the rules of which included the obligation of perpetual wandering, and of entertaining an eternal hatred against the Orders from which he had been excluded. The title of *Kalender*, which he assumed and bestowed on his

[1] Creasy, *History of the Ottoman Turks*, pp. 14–15.
[2] Von Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottomane*, vol. ii. p. 71.
[3] This was followed by a general persecution of the Bektashis.

followers, signifies "pure," implying the purity of heart, spirituality of soul, and exemption from worldly contamination, which Yussuf required in his disciples, qualities somewhat at variance, one would suppose, with the above-mentioned obligation. This same title of *Kalender*, it may be remarked,[1] is also given to Dervishes of all Orders who are distinguished among their brethren for superior spirituality. It is this class of "enlightened" beings which has produced so many dangerous fanatics in every age of Mohammedanism. From it have come the assassins of sultans, viziers, and grandees of the Empire, and all the unconscious impostors who, under the title of *Mahdi*, have misled thousands and desolated whole countries by their supposed prophecies and divine revelations.

[1] *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, p. 20.

CHAPTER VIII

INITIATION RITES AMONG THE DERVISHES[1]

The founder of one of the earliest Orders of Dervishes, Sheikh Olwan, laid down certain rules to be observed in the admission of new members into his Brotherhood; and these rules, though subsequently elaborated by certain of the Orders, are still substantially the same in their leading features, differing only in the severity of the discipline imposed upon a candidate, in the length of his period of probation, and in certain minor details.

As a general rule, a neophyte is required during his novitiate to live in complete retirement from the world, to perform the menial offices of the *Tekkah,* (Monastery) and to repeat daily, 101, 151, or 301 times one of the attributes of the Deity. These are ninety-seven in number, and are called the *Isami Ilahi,* or "Beautiful Names of Allah." Seven only of these are used by a *Murid,* or Candidate; they are *La Ilaha il 'Allah* ("There is no God but Allah"); *Ya Allah* ("O God"); *Ya Hoo* ("O Him"); *Ya Haak* ("O Truth"); *Ya Hay* ("O Ever Living"); *Ya Kayyoum* ("O Self-existent"); and *Ya Kahhar* ("O Almighty"). In the first stage of his probation the neophyte repeats only the first attribute, and his advancement through the seven successive stages depends upon the proofs he is able to give of the reality of his vocation for a Dervish life. These proofs are found in the frequency and vividness of the dreams and visions vouchsafed to him, which he is bound to communicate to his Superior.

Admission into the Mevlevi Order is only obtained by the performance of an uninterrupted novitiate of a thousand and one consecutive days. Should the *Murid* fail in a single day's duties, or be absent from the *Tekkah* for one

[1] From *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey,* by L. M. J. Garnett. London, 1912.

whole night, his probation must be recommenced; and, whatever his worldly rank, he must consider himself the subordinate of every member of the *Tekkah*. He is instructed in his duties by the *Ashjibashi*, or Chief of the Kitchen, spends much of his time in prayers and fasting, and in committing to memory the prayers and passages of the Koran more especially used by his Order. He must also become proficient in the mystic dance, and take part in the public services of the Brotherhood. The novice, having passed through his period of probation to the satisfaction of the Chief of the Kitchen, that functionary—who acts as his sponsor—reports him to the Sheikh as worthy of admission to the initiatory grade of the Order, and a meeting of all the Brotherhood is convened in the *Ismi Jelik Hujreh*, the private assembly room of the *Tekkah*. When all are assembled, the *Murid* is led by the *Ashjibashi* to the Prior, who occupies the seat of honour in the angle of the divan; he kisses the extended hand of his Superior, and seats himself on the floor before him. His sponsor then places his right hand on the neck, and his left on the forehead of the neophyte, the Sheikh takes off the *kulah* which, with the rest of the Mevlevi costume he has worn during his novitiate, and proceeds to chant a Persian distich composed by the founder of the Order. He then delivers an exhortation to the young disciple, at the termination of which he replaces the *kulah* on his head. The *Murid* and his sponsor now place themselves in the middle of the room, where they assume a posture of profound humility, standing with folded arms, crossed toes, and bowed heads. The *Ashjibashi* is then addressed as follows by the Sheikh :—

"May the services of the *Murid*, thy brother, be agreeable to the Throne of the Eternal, and in the eyes of our *Pir*, may His satisfaction, His felicity, and His glory grow in the nest of the humble, in the cell of the poor. Let us exclaim *Hoo* (HIM) in honour of our *Mevlana*."[1] The *Murid* and his sponsor answer "*Hoo*" and the former then kisses the hand of the Sheikh, who addresses to him some paternal remarks on his new position, and concludes by asking all the members of the congregation to embrace and welcome their new brother.

[1] The founder of the Order, Mevlana Jelalu-'d-Din.

A novice of the *Bektashi* Order is also required to perform a novitiate of a thousand and one days, during which he frequents the services in the *Tekkah*. But the formalities observed by this Order in the reception of candidates differ from those of the Mevlevi Brethren, and are even more elaborate. A candidate is recommended to the Sheikh by two members of the community who are called his " Interpreters."[1] He must also have already given, during his novitiate, proofs of spiritual knowledge and acquirements, and have faithfully kept certain pretended secrets of the Order imparted to him as tests of his powers of reticence. His reception into the Brotherhood is also determined by the revelations concerning him received, in dreams or visions, by the Sheikh, from the *Pir* or from Ali. What is thus revealed is not communicated to the neophyte.

On the evening appointed for the ceremony of initiation—for the services of the *Bektashi* Order are always held by night—the neophyte takes with him to the convent a sheep and a small sum of money. The sheep is sacrificed on the threshold of the *Tekkah*, part of its wool is twisted into a rope, the rest being preserved to be made, later on, into a girdle for his use. If the candidate desires to take the vow of celibacy, he is stripped naked ; but if he proposes, as in the generality of cases to take only the ordinary, or secular vow of this widespread and numerous Order, his breast only is bared. With the rope round his neck he is led by his " Interpreters," one of whom carries the symbol termed the *tebber*, a kind of battle-axe, into the hall of the *Tekkah*. Here he stands with his arms folded across his breast, his hands on his shoulders, his toes crossed, and his body inclined towards the Sheikh—a posture signifying abject humility and designated *buyun kesmek*. The Prior and the Twelve Elders are seated around the hall on their sheepskins, a lighted candle being placed in front of each. One of the " Interpreters " announces to the Prior that he has brought to him a slave, and requests his acceptance of the gift. He acquiesces, and the neophyte, addressing him, repeats this prayer :—

[1] *Terjuman*. This term also signifies the secret pass-word or phrase of the Bektashi Order.

"I have erred; pardon my fault, O Shah! For the sake of the Accepted One (Ali) of the Exalted Place; for the sake of the Martyr (Husein). I have done wrong to myself, and to our Lord, and I implore pardon of Him."

His "fault" is supposed to consist in having so long delayed to join the Order. The Sheikh then recites a sort of Litany, to which the *Murid* makes the responses.

"In the Name of Allah, the Merciful and the Clement:—

"I beseech Allah's forgiveness (thrice repeated); I have come to implore pardon; I have come in search of the Truth; I ask it for the sake of the Just. Truth is the path which leads to Allah, the All True, whom I know. What you term Evil, I also know to be Evil, and I will avoid taking with my hands what is another's. . . . Repent of your sins unto Allah, a repentance that knows not return unto sin."

Then follows an exhortation by the Superior:—

"Eat nothing forbidden; speak no falsehood: quarrel with none; be kind to your inferiors; overlook the faults of others, and conceal them. If you cannot do this with your hand, do it with your skirts, your tongue, and your heart."

The novice then kisses the hand of the Sheikh, who continues:—

"If thou now accept me as thy father, I accept thee as my son. Be hereafter the pledge of Allah breathed in thy right ear."

He then repeats after his Superior the words: "Mohammed is my leader, and Ali is my guide." The Sheikh asks, "Dost thou accept me as thy Guide (meaning as the representative of Ali)?" to which he responds, "I accept thee as my Guide"; and the Sheikh adds, "Then I accept thee as my son."

The postulant is now led by his "Interpreters" to the Sheikh, before whom he first bows low and then prostrates himself, touching the floor with his forehead. Kneeling opposite to him so closely that their knees touch, the Superior takes the postulant's right hand in his, and the thumbs are raised to represent the Arabic letter *Alif*. The latter places his ear to the mouth of the Sheikh who imparts to him in a whisper the *Ikranameh*, or secret vows of the

Order. As the tenets of the Bektashis are believed by many to be purely pantheistic, it is asserted that the words whispered by the Sheikh to the *Murid* convey a doctrine to which he must assent on pain of death, and admit the unity of God and Nature. But this assertion is positively denied by others; and it would, indeed, be difficult to prove it, as the secrets of the Order are never committed to writing, and are known only to its members, who, it is believed, are deterred by the most frightful penalties from divulging them.

When the disciple is presented with the girdle and the stone worn in it, the Prior, as he binds it round his waist says to him: "I now bind up thy waist in the path of Allah—O Holy Name, possessed of all knowledge! Whoever knows this Name will become the successor of his Sheikh (*Naib*)." Certain principles of the Order are then imparted to the novice, who is also instructed in various mystic tenets concerning the universe and the Koran. The Sheikh then sums up by saying, "There is but one Light, and the Truth is (as) the Moon. He who has found the science of his own body (called the *Ilum i Vurgood*, his spiritual counterpart) knows his Lord; for the holy Prophet has said, "To know thyself is to know thy Lord. In this is comprised a knowledge of thine own secret, and that of thy Creator."

When a Bektashi takes the vow of celibacy, he is asked by the Sheikh whether, if he break it, he is willing to come under the sword of Ali, to which he replies in the affirmative. The inner signification of this phrase is said to contain one of the secret vows of the Order. On putting on for the first time the sash or *Alif-lam*,[1] he says, "I abandon all matrimony, and bind myself to this sash so to do." The *Murid* then recites chapter cxii of the Koran; after which the Sheikh declares to him that "Allah doth not engender or bring forth, and so may men tell of thee, and no one is equal to Him."

Twelve being the Bektashi mystical number, a member having broken a vow, incurs twelve punishments. One of their secret signs is said to consist of the words *Tebran* and *Toolan*—"far" and "near"—signifying "near in affection and far in conceit."

[1] The first and last letters of the Arabic alphabet.

The ceremonies of affiliation of the other Orders bear a great resemblance to the foregoing, with the exception of those of the *Kadiri*, the *Rufa'i* the *Sa'di*.

A novice of the *Rufa'i* receives from the Sheikh a small cup of water from the *Zemzem*—the Sacred Well of Mekka,—which, after reciting a prayer over, he drinks.

At the initiation of a *Sa'di* Dervish, a number of dates are placed before the Superior. He selects one, extracts the stone, breathes upon the fruit and puts it into the mouth of the neophyte who is seated on the floor before him. Two members of the Order seat themselves to the right and left of him, and proceed to sway him from side to side, reciting at the same time: "There is no God but Allah," the Sheikh doing the same, until he has swallowed the date. All then rise, and the *Murid*, after kissing the hand of the superior, is acknowledged as a brother by the rest of the congregation.

A person wishing to join the *Kadiri* Order intimates his desire to one of its members. The Dervish enjoins him to frequent the *Tekkah* and its services, and also to wait upon the brethren and their guests. These menial duties are required from every neophyte, whatever his worldly rank may be. The period of probation lasts for many months, during which time the *Murid* becomes greatly attached to his Superior. When he has been deemed worthy to enter the ranks of the Dervishes, he is directed to procure a cap of plain white felt, which is carried by his sponsor to the Sheikh. A *gul*, or piece of cloth stamped into the shape of a rose of eighteen petals, and having in the centre the "Solomon's Seal"—two interlaced triangles—is then attached to it. When the brethren assemble in the *Tekkah* for the performance of the *Zihr*, or invocation of Allah, the Sheikh takes his place on his sheepskin and the neophyte, led by his sponsor, kneels before him and kisses his hand. The Sheikh takes off the novice's ordinary cap, and replaces it by that bearing the "Rose," which he has carried in his bosom, and says, three times, "Allaha Ekber" (God is Great).

A disciple does not, however, even after this formal reception into it, become at once a full member of the Order. This grade is only reached after, it may be, years of further probation, and its attainment depends upon the proofs he

is able to give of his progress in spirituality. His final admission to full brotherhood is usually determined by a revelation from the *Pir*, or from Ali, received simultaneously by himself and his Sheikh. While passing through these intermediate stages, the aspirant is under the guidance of the Superior, or of an initiate who has himself reached the highest degree. During the first stage, which is termed *Sheriat*, or "the Law," the disciple observes all the usual rites of Moslem worship, obeys all the commands and precepts of the Koran like any other True Believer, and is treated by the brethren of the community as an uninitiated outsider. He is taught, at the same time, to concentrate his thoughts so completely on his "Guide" as to become mentally absorbed in him as a spiritual link with the supreme object of all devotion. This Guide must be the neophyte's shield against all worldly thoughts and desires; his spirit must aid him in all his efforts, accompany him wherever he may be, and be ever present to his mental vision. Such a frame of mind it termed "annihilation into the *Murshid*," and the Guide discovers, by means of his own visions, the degree of spirituality to which his disciple has attained, and to what extent his soul has become absorbed into his own.

The *Murid* now enters upon what, in Dervish phraseology, is called "the Path." During this period, which forms in reality the transition from outward to hidden things, the disciple is familiarized with those philosophical writings of the great Sufi masters which form the chief object of the lectures and studies of the Order. He is taught to substitute spiritual for ritual worship, and led by degrees to abandon the dogmas and formulas of Islam as necessary only for the unenlightened masses. This method is, however, pursued with great tact and caution, for a disciple is not released from the usual observances of religion until he has given proof of sincere piety, virtue, exceptional spirituality, and extreme asceticism; and a Dervish at this stage of his novitiate passes most of his time in solitary contemplation, endeavouring to detach his mind from all visible objects in order to attain the desired union with the Deity. His Guide, meanwhile, imparts to him his own mystical philosophy as he finds him capable of receiving it. If the disciple's religious feeling

appear to be shocked by any maxim to which he has given utterance, the already mentioned Jesuitical expedient known as the *Ketman* supplies the Master with a double sense which enables him at once to convince his disciple of the groundlessness of his objections. If, on the contrary, the *Murshid* finds his pupil's theological digestion robust, his advance on the path will be correspondingly rapid. He is now supposed to come under the spiritual influence of the *Pir*, or founder of the Order, in whom he in turn becomes mentally absorbed to such a degree as to be virtually one with him, acquiring his attributes and power of performing supernatural acts.

The next stage of the mystic life is that termed by the Dervishes "Spiritual Knowledge," and the disciple who believes himself, and is believed by his Sheikh, to have attained to such knowledge or, in other words, to have become inspired, is held to be on an equality with the Angels. He now enters into spiritual communion with the Prophet himself, into whose soul his own has become absorbed.

The fourth degree is usually attained during the forty days of fasting and seclusion, observed by every Dervish during his novitiate. In his ecstatic state he believes himself to have become a part of the Divinity, and sees Him in all things. The Sheikh, after witnessing this remarkable proof of the success of his teachings, gently awakens the disciple from his ecstasy, and having restored him to his normal condition, bestows upon him the rank of *khalifeh* ("successor"). The mystic now resumes his outward observance of the rites of Islam, and prepares for his pilgrimage to the Holy Cities.

Not every Dervish, however, attains even to the third grade; and the highest is attained only by the few. Those less spiritually gifted, or less mystically minded, still continue to recognize the personal and anthropomorphic Allah of the Koran, and look forward at death only to a closer intimacy with Him than that which will be enjoyed by those who have not entered on "the Path."

CHAPTER IX

OTHER SCHIITE SECTS: THE METAWILEH

FROM the fact that the so-called Orthodox Mohammedans have taken the name of Sunnites (Traditionists), "followers of the Sunnah," to distinguish themselves from the Schiites, the impression prevails in some quarters that the latter entirely reject tradition. But with all the veneration of the Schiites for the Koran as the Word of GOD, and the repository of all the dogmas, doctrines, laws, and ordinances of the faith of Islam, they believe also in the value of oral traditions. They reject, indeed, says Wortabet,[1] "many traditions which the Moslems believe to have been handed down by the earliest successors of Mohammed, because these mediums are detested by the Schiites, and their report of traditions is considered as untruthful. But while they deny the genuineness of many of the traditions preserved by the Moslems, they have a set of their own, which again are regarded as spurious by the Sunnites.

"The Schiites of Syria term themselves Metawileh; they are found in Akkar, a district to the north of Tripoli; in Belad Besharah and Shukeif, the mountainous country east of Tyre and Sidon, with a small number in these cities; and in Baalbec and Coele-Syria. Their number in these places possibly amounts to about fifty thousand souls."

They believe, with the Orthodox Mohammedan, that the divine mission of Mohammed is established beyond all doubt by the numerous and satisfactory miracles of which he was the subject, and by those which he performed. They believe that the Koran is the undisputed word of GOD, and the guide of men to truth, virtue, and paradise, and that therefore there is great merit in reading it.

[1] Wortabet, *Religions of Syria*, pp. 266 ff.

On the subject of ethics, the Metawileh do not differ much from other Moslems.[1] All good works they divide into duties, or works of ordinances, and works of supererogation. The first division comprises prayer, fasting, alms, and pilgrimage; the prompt performance of duty to parents, kinsmen, and slaves; circumcision of males; self-preservation; a life that is neither extravagant nor niggardly; marriage in all cases where there is danger of sin; veracity in the communications and transactions of life; good faith both to believers and unbelievers, even to the murderers of El Husein; the performance of all engagements and promises; the right use of all the blessings of God; contentment; exhortation to others; feeding the poor, and helping the distressed, etc. These duties, however, though among the most primary, are not in every instance binding on all; e.g. alms is a duty only when the person is of full age and in affluent circumstances, and pilgrimage is binding on those only who are able to perform it. The works of supererogation are many, the following being the principal. The frequent mention of the name of God; the assiduous reading of the Koran; frequenting the public places of worship; the habit of saluting believers, and of returning their salutations; making many friends, showing civility to them, and requiting them for their favours, readiness to help; generosity to the members of the family, and to others; compassion on the poor and needy; veneration of old age among believers, and humility towards all the faithful; patience under injury; mildness and dignity in deportment; and shunning the use of evil language. In addition to these, the pious man must cultivate a sense of his shortcomings at all times.

The Metawileh consider that for the same reasons that men need a prophet they need also an Imaum, with whom God deposits all the learning and knowledge of religion, who shall give a right and indisputable interpretation of the Koran, and who shall thus be a standing witness to the truth of the Islam faith. As he is *ex officio* the king of the Mohammedans, whose business it is to lead them in war in the cause of God, and to administer justice to the poor and

[1] Wortabet, *Researches into the Religions of Syria*, pp. 268 ff.

oppressed, he is also their high priest, their preacher, the expounder of their faith, and their guide in all spiritual concerns. He should be the best and most learned man of his age, and is, in fact, as inspired and infallible as the prophet Mohammed was. "We," says one of the twelve Imaums, "possess all that the prophet possessed, except the office of prophecy and the right to have more than four wives," Mohammed having enjoyed the privilege of taking eleven. The Imaums are pure and holy beings, acquainted with the secrets of the Most High, and are the way of access to Him as mediators and intercessors. Their commands are the commands of God himself, and disobedience to them is disobedience to Him; and, in short, as Noah was only saved by entering into the ark, so a man can be safe from the wrath of God in time and eternity only by a sincere attachment to them.

The office of Imaum is a perpetual one, and since its establishment it has never been vacant. Ali was succeeded by eleven of his descendants, constituting with himself the twelve Imaums who held so important a place in the creed of the Schiites. The thirteenth—Mohammed Ibn el-Hasan el-Askang—disappeared without having died, but he continues to live till the present time, though in a state of disguise, and without being known. He is believed to communicate with men *incognito*, being often, if not always, present among the multitudes who crowd the holy Kaaba every year. At the appointed time he will manifest himself to men, and will then be known by the name of the Guide (El Muhdi) and with Jesus, the Son of Mary, will fill the whole world with the knowledge of God, and with justice and piety, even as it is now full of idolatry, error, and unrighteousness. This set time is fast approaching. All this is a part of the settled faith of the Metawileh. Some of their learned men believe also that after the appearance of the Muhdi, he will in due time die, and be succeeded by his own father, or predecessor in the office, who will be raised from death for this purpose; and a retrograde resurrection and succession will go on, until the twelve Imaums shall have risen and completed the regeneration of the world. After this will come the end, the judgment and eternity.

The Metawileh of Syria believe that they have among them the veritable descendants of El Hasan and El Husein, the children of Ali; and the Schiites of Persia, and even the Moslems of that country, do not dispute the veracity of these claims. From the fact, however, that large numbers have made the same claims, the intelligent classes have their doubts on the subject, and are content to treat it with indifference. These two branches of the descendants of Ali, called El Hasaniyeh and El Huseiniyeh, reside in Belad Beshara, wear the green turban as the badge of their honourable descent, and are called Suyyad. They are distinguished by their strict adherence to their religion, and display all that sanctimonious piety which forms an essential part of it. They are treated with great respect by the Metawileh, out of veneration for their illustrious origin.

The Metawileh, rejecting the opinions of the four Mohammedan schools, hold that Jaafar Ibn Mohammed, the sixth Imaum from Ali, was the person commissioned to give the Mohammedan system its most definite and permanent form. To his sayings, preserved it is said wholly by tradition, they appeal in all cases where a question of religion or jurisprudence is concerned, and he is to be considered, therefore, as the author of their peculiar views.

In prayer, the Metawileh perform their ablutions in a different way from the Mohammedans, using very little water for the occasion. When they bow to the ground, their heads are made to touch a small cake of earth, which they constantly carry with them for the purpose, made from the very spot where El Husein was killed. If this cake happens to be lost, or not obtainable, they use for the purpose a stone, or some other material, to remind them of the holy earth on which was shed the blood of their illustrious martyr. Unlike the Moslems, each one prays singly, unless the leader be a *Muhtahid*, a kind of doctor of divinity, who has completed his studies in Irak, and has returned with satisfactory testimonials of his having attained a high degree of learning and piety. At the hour of prayer, all articles of clothing in which gold is wrought, and gold or silver rings and watches, are laid aside. Among the points of difference on the subject of pilgrimage, the most remarkable is, that it may

be performed by proxy, even though the person for whom the service is done be dead. Another of their peculiar customs is, that when a person dies in affluent circumstances, he is covered with a shroud on which a part or the whole of the Koran is written—the price of the article ranging from five hundred to two thousand five hundred piastres—and readers are employed to read the Koran over the grave of the newly deceased, with the idea that while this is going on, the black angels will not be permitted to approach the dead body. The Schiites always begin and end the fast of Ramadan with the visible appearance of the new moon, not depending on computation of time, except in cloudy weather. The fast of the day begins at broad daylight, and ends by the time that the eastern horizon is wholly free from the last refracted rays of the set sun, both periods being about half an hour later than the computation of the Mohammedans. All travellers, according to the Koran, are excused from fasting, but the Metawileh do not consider less than seven hours' travelling as permitting food; if it comes up to this measure of time, they deem it wrong to fast. Neither can the traveller fast at all unless he expects to stay ten days at the place of his destination. Should he fast on the way it will not be valid, and must be commuted by an equal number of other days. The Sunnites and Schiites differ considerably on some of the readings in the Koran, and also on the interpretation of some important passages.

In their bearing the Metawileh are sanctimonious and pharisaical, proud of their religion and of their strict adherence to its ceremonial observances, and lay claim to superior learning. But few, however, among the higher classes, have any intelligence or general information; and even their learning is superficial, and their acquaintance with the state of the civilized world very limited. In their morals they are not any better, if not indeed much worse, than the Moslems. The lower classes among them are addicted to petty theft, and all of them to shameless lying. Nor does it appear that they consider either theft or lying to be great crimes, especially when the victims of their fraud are persons who do not belong to their sect. It is even said by the

Christians who live among them, that they have heard them declare that it is meritorious to rob and injure Gentiles; but of this repulsive doctrine we have found no positive indications in their books.

In their feelings towards Christianity they do not differ from the other Moslems. To a firm belief in the absolute unity of the person of God, in the divine mission of Mohammed and in the Koran as the undisputed word of God, they add a regard for Ali and the Imaums scarcely inferior to their veneration of the Arabian prophet. These points are so interwoven with all their ideas of religion, and with all their feelings as religious beings, that nothing short of the power of God can change their sentiments on and abhorrence to Christianity. The doctrines of the Trinity, the Divinity of our Saviour, and the Atonement, are equally repulsive to Moslems and Metawileh. Jesus they believe to have been a mere man, a prophet, like Mohammed, sent to teach men the knowledge of God. That he is the Son of God, equal with God, a person in the Godhead—this sounds strangely in their ears, and is a stumbling-block which they cannot get over. The Koran, the magnificent eloquence and classic purity of which lend such a fascination and power to its diction, declares that God is one, to whom there is no equal or companion, and who neither begets nor is begotten. And this language rings perpetually in their ears from the days of childhood to the last moments of life, and presents an unwavering protest against the idolatry of the Christians who believe in and worship more than one God. The Schiites of Persia and the learned Sunnites maintain, indeed, that the first thing that God created out of Himself was Wisdom; and one, at the first view, might suppose that this doctrine would prepare their minds to believe in the divinity of Jesus. But the Wisdom on which they theorise is *created*, and is a *thing*, not a being equal to and co-eternal with God. Between the merit of good works and the mercy of God, they can find no place for the doctrine of the Atonement.

CHAPTER X

THE SECT OF THE ESSENES AND THEIR TENETS

AFTER the Persian captivity of the Jews, and their subsequent return to Palestine, three Jewish sects existed, the Pharisees, the Essenes, and the Sadducees, the last being purely Mosaic, the first exhibiting many Buddhist characteristics, and the Essenes in particular showing strong signs of their faith having been founded by Buddhist missionaries, teaching the doctrines and practice of Sakya Muni.

The Hebrews, says Inman, the well-known author who, in his anxiety to condemn all religious faiths gives us some exceedingly valuable side-lights from his researches with regard to them, " always showed, during the Old Testament times, a great aptitude to adopt the faith of outsiders—and as the Jewish people were in great abasement and misery at the period when it is probable the Buddhist missionaries came into Syria, they would be prepared for the doctrine that they were suffering for bygone sins. The idea that men in the present were sometimes punished for sins done in the past was a Hebrew as well as a Hindu idea, else Saul's sons would not have been hanged for their father's misdeeds, or the Amalekites have been slaughtered by Samuel, because their forefathers had, some centuries before, fought with Israel, and been conquered by Moses and Joshua."[1]

The remarkable sect of the Essenes have always been considered to have had a very close connection with Freemasonry. In many of our Masonic rituals and lectures their name occurs. In certain American " Instructions " in the Craft ritual, printed in language intended to be

[1] Thomas Inman, M.D., *Ancient Faiths and Modern*, p. 143. Bouton, New York, 1876.

unintelligible to the "uninitiated or popular world who are not Freemasons," the latter are alluded to throughout as "Essenes."

The Essenes are described by Rev. Dr. Ginsburg,[1] a good authority on the subject, and one who quotes largely from Josephus, as a Jewish sect of singular piety. They did not sacrifice animals, but endeavoured to make their own minds holy—fit for an acceptable offering to JEHOVAH. They provided themselves with just enough for the necessities of life, and held such goods as they possessed, e.g. clothes and cloaks, in common. They only allowed themselves to converse on such parts of philosophy as concern GOD and man. They abhorred slavery, but each served his neighbour. They respected the Sabbath. Their fundamental laws were, to love GOD, to love virtue, and to love mankind. They affected to despise money, fame, pleasures, professed the most strict chastity, or rather continence, and they practised endurance as a duty. They also cultivated simplicity, cheerfulness, modesty, and order. They lived together in the same houses and villages, and sustained the poor, the sick, and the aged. When they earned wages, the money was paid to a common stock. They did not marry, or have children; but if any of their body chose to wed, there was nothing in the regulations to prevent their doing so, only they then had to enter another class of the brotherhood. When possible they worked all day. They were highly respected by those who knew them, and were frequently receiving additions to their number. They seem to have resembled, in their habits and customs, a fraternity of monks of a working, rather than a mendicant Order.

Pleasure they regarded as an evil, having a tendency to enchain man to earthly enjoyments, a peculiarly Buddhist tenet. Still further, they considered the use of ointment as defiling, which was certainly not a Hebraic doctrine; but they dressed decently. They prayed devoutly before sunrise; but until the sun had risen they never spoke of worldly matters. They gave thanks, and prayed before and after eating; and before they entered their refectory they bathed in pure water. The food provided was of the

[1] *The Essenes.* Longmans, London, 1864.

simplest kind, and just in sufficient quantity to keep them alive. When a person wished to join the community, he was required to undergo a period of probation, and, if approved, he took a solemn oath—" to fear God ; to be just towards all men ; never to wrong anyone ; to detest the wicked, and love the righteous ; to keep faith with all men ; not to be proud ; not to try and outshine his neighbours in any matter ; to love truth, and to try and reclaim all liars ; never to steal or cajole ; never to conceal anything from the brotherhood, and to be reticent with outsiders."

Freemasons will perceive in the various clauses of this Essene Obligation a very strong resemblance to solemn injunctions they themselves undertook to obey, in the three Craft degrees, a still further confirmation, were any such wanting, of the fact that the Essenes, in common with other Syrian sects, possessed and adhered to the " true principles of Freemasonry."

Josephus, in writing of the Essenes, compares them with the Pythagoreans, a sect also holding doctrines evidently brought from Persia and Hindostan. Pliny, in writing of the Essenes, remarks that their usages differ from those of all other nations—which we may take as a proof that they did not copy their constitution from Greeks, Romans, or Jews, however much they might be indebted for it to their secluded neighbours in the Lebanon.

Respecting the origin of this sect, nothing certain appears to be known, beyond the fact that they were in existence in the time of the Maccabees. Ordinary critics decline to see in them any direct relations to the Pythagoreans, and some imagine that the order sprung naturally out of a spiritual reading of the Mosaic law, modified, probably, by Persian or Chaldean notions.

Whether or not we take as fact the details given of the early life of Jesus Christ, as related in the " Aquarian Gospels " and in " Hafed, Prince of Persia," it seems highly probable that Our Lord may have spent some years of His life, before commencing His short three years' ministry in Palestine, in a residence among, and discussion of their doctrines with, other Eastern nations. It seems probable, from His plain dislike of the doctrines of both Pharisees and

Sadducees that He was in sympathy with those of their keen opponents, the Essenes, which will account for the claim by certain writers of the period, as well as subsequently, that Jesus of Nazareth was an Essene. Certainly, so far as His human personality may have required some form of religious observance, that of the Essenes would have been, undoubtedly, most in consonance with His divine nature. Modern Freemasonry, therefore, has acted wisely in incorporating with the monotheistic principles of the ancient Craft degrees, with their foreshadowings of a coming Messiah, the more excellent and perfect teaching of the later, and higher degrees, and their references, in so many ways, to the past and future influence on human nature of the Saviour of mankind, in deed and in truth the greatest Teacher of the real, the inner principles of all Freemasonry.

Yarker, writing of the Essenes, says: "This important mystic sect amongst the Jews has puzzled historians. It may have struck out a new path from the Kabalistic road, but the extreme veneration of its members for the sun is more characteristic of Chaldea and of the existing Yezids. Jewish critics believe that they are the Assideans, Chasdim, or old believers allied with the Maccabees. They afterwards divided into two sects, or the contemplative and practical members. Other writers consider that they were Egyptian priests, driven into Syria by the conquests of Cambyses of Persia and Alexander the Great, and it is very probably that this may be partly correct, and that they may have included Jesus ben Panther, a nephew of Queen Salome, who, after studying Egyptian Theurgy, and preaching to the people, was proclaimed for forty days, and then stoned to death and hung on a tree at Lyda, about the year 100 B.C."[1]

The Essenes are said to have recognized eight (some say ten) spiritual stages of ascent to beatitude; and they had, like the Pythagoreans, a system of degrees with a probationary period between each. Their doctrines were delivered orally and they took a solemn oath of secrecy, chastity and justice in all their dealings, as mentioned above. When addressing their chiefs they stood with their right hand extended below their chin and the left dropped to their side.

[1] *The Arcane Schools*, p. 156.

A select class of the Essenes were termed *Therapeutæ* or healers, who dwelt in small houses containing an inner shrine which they used for contemplative purposes. They kept the Sabbath, and, every seventh time seven, they had a special service with mystic dances, evidently resembling those in the ancient Mysteries. Philo says : " They have impulses of heavenly love by which they kindle, in all, the enthusiasm of the Corybantes, and the Baccanalians, and are raised to that state of contemplation after which they aspire."

Eusebius, the Christian historian, has some curious remarks on the sect. He says : " Their doctrines are to be found among none but in the religion of Christians, according to the Gospel. Their meetings, and the separate places of the men and women at their meetings, and the exercises performed by them, are still in use among us at the present day, equally at the feast of our Saviour's Passion."

Josephus, who had evidently personal knowledge of the Essenes, makes mention of books which were kept very secret amongst them referring, he says, to " the names of the Angels."

Apparently there were branches of the Essenes and especially of the Therapeutæ, who became actual Christians, such as the Nazarenes, Ebionites, and Nabatheans, and the first term is yet in use in the East to designate Christians who first took that name at Antioch. Theodoret says : " The Nazarenes are Jews, honouring the Anointed as a just man," and using the " Evangel according to St. Peter," portions of which were discovered some years ago in Egypt, with fragments of the *Logia of the Lord*. The Ebionites were a portion of the sect, having amongst them relatives of Jesus, and they used the Gospel of St. Matthew, derived, some say, from the *Logia* : they dwelt in a region near the seat of the Adonisian mysteries ;[1] they looked upon Jesus as assuming his apostleship at the descent of the Holy Spirit, and that His Messiahship would begin with His Second Coming.

In a very interesting book in my own library, which I am prohibited from alluding to more distinctly, as it is connected with the ritual of a sect, dating back to the very

[1] The Weeping for Adonis was practised in Syria down to A.D. 400.

earliest ages, the following particulars are given with respect to the Essenes, with whom they have a certain amount of resemblance :—

"Two hundred years after the College of Prophecy raised up Amos, Hosea and Jonah, Manasses, son of Hezekiah, established idol worship, and by law abolished the worship of Jehovah. He caused the prophet Isaiah to be sawn in twain, because he worshipped Jehovah. For three hundred years following, the children of the prophets were a small body, and scattered in many lands. The rest, who were called Jews, lived under written laws and ceremonies, which were compiled and established by Ezra in Jerusalem, which combination of books was called The Scriptures. From that time forward the Jews became worshippers of the Lord and the God, but the scattered tribes still held to the worship of the Great Spirit, Jehovah, keeping their service secret. These were without sin, doing no war, nor resistance of evil against evil, and loving one another as oneself. From these sprang the Essenians, cultivating prophecy and purity of spirit, and the angels of Jehovah dwelt with these Essenians, who were the true Israelites in fact, and were about seven hundred in number. They were a separate people, pledged to Jehovah to have no king or ruler save their own rabbis. They dwelt in communities of tens and twenties, and hundreds, holding all things in common. In marriage they were monogamous, neither would they have more than one suit of clothes each ; and they lived on fruit and herbs only ; nor ate they flesh, nor fish, nor the flesh of anything that ever breathed the breath of life ; and they bathed every morning at sunrise, doing in all things after the manner of their forefathers. By virtue of the angel hosts who were with them did they see things. And they held communion with the angels of heaven every night before going to sleep. Yet, though they lived in great purity of body and soul, they were evilly slandered by the people round about them on every side. But Jehovah prospered the seed of the Essenians, in holiness and love, for many generations. Then came the chief of the angels, according to the commandment of God, to raise up an heir to the Voice of Jehovah. And, in four generations more, an heir was born, and named Joshua,

and he was the child of Joseph and Mara, devout worshippers of Jehovah, who stood aloof from all other people save the Essenians. And this Joshua, in Nazareth, re-established Jehovah, and restored many of the lost rites and ceremonies. In the thirty-sixth year of his age he was stoned to death in Jerusalem, by the Jews that worshipped the heathen gods."

"The beliefs of the Essenes and their monastic life are similar to the beliefs and practices of the early Gnostic sects of Syria.[1] They performed no sacrifices, and paid no attention to Pharisaic rites or books, having instead a literature of their own, and using apparently 'lustrations' or baptisms instead of sacrifice. Their contempt of the world, their peaceful contented life and chastity, seem to have secured them a general reverence. The hermit Banu or Bunai, of whom Josephus was for a time a follower, appears to have belonged to this sect." Their connection with the Therapeutæ of Egypt is usually recognized, and Pliny speaks of their colony near the Dead Sea. Josephus estimates their number at about four thousand. Their belief in charms, their prayers to the rising sun, and their reverence for light, show, however, that they were not far removed above the level of their fellows. We can hardly doubt that in the beliefs of this sect we trace more or less remotely the influence of Buddhism, which was at this time so strongly pressing on the West, and which we find to have been familiar as an Indian religion to the fathers of the Church, from Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria to Jerome. It is difficult to believe that such monasticism was of purely Egyptian or Syrian origin. It certainly contravenes the most important principles of Judaism; and in Egypt the wives of priests were priestesses in the great ages of the empire.

"At Antioch, Christianity was less severely Jewish," says Conder,[2] "The Christoi, here first so named, were known to the vulgar as Chrestoi, or 'good' people. Saturninus, the Gnostic, founded his school at Antioch, and taught that Christ was a phantom not really born of flesh and blood. He was a rigid ascetic, and abstained from all animal food.

[1] Col. C. R. Conder, R.E., *Syrian Stone Lore*, p. 202. London, 1886.
[2] *Syrian Stone Lore*, p. 250.

Much of his philosophy was founded, apparently, on the Zoroastrian system. Tatian, known for his fierce attack on the pagan religion, founded a sect in Syria about 166 A.D. called Encratites, or Abstainers, the teetotalers of the age who even used pure water instead of wine for the Eucharist, They forbade marriage and the eating of animal food, and they held the same view with Saturninus as to the phantom Christ, never either born or suffering death."

Syria, indeed, at this time was full of Gnostic sects, such as the Ophites, who worshipped serpents in connection with the Eucharist; the Markosians, who claimed to change the water of the holy cup to blood, and who believed in Kabalistic figures and Syriac magic sentences; the Cainites, who commended Judas Iscariot as a martyr; the Adamites, who worshipped naked in their churches; the Setheans, named from their views as to Seth; and the Elchesaites (in the third century), who were connected with the older Essenes. The prophet of the latter lived in the days of Trajan, it is said, and received an inspired book from heaven. The Sabians or Mendaiites, at the mouth of the Euphrates, were connected with this Essene Gnostic sect, which seems to have had its headquarters in the deserts of the Dead Sea; and the Ebionites of Bashan accepted Elchesai as a prophet. Elchesai laid great stress on baptism frequently repeated, as among the Sabians, and shows a Judaizing tendency in his belief in the necessity of sacrifice. He honoured the patriachs, and identified Christ with Adam, but rejected the later prophets. He commanded abstinence from flesh, but allowed marriage, which accounts for the late survival of the Sabians as "Christians of St. John." The Elchesait Eucharist appears to have consisted of bread, salt, and probably water.

Heckethorn[1] says they took every possible precaution in the admission of members into their secret Order, which was divided into four degrees, and the process of initiation was so arranged that a candidate, even after having entered the third, did not know the grand secret, and if not found trustworthy to be admitted into the innermost sanctuary, remained totally unconscious of its real nature, and only

[1] *Secret Societies*, vol. i. p. 99.

saw in it the governing ranks, highest in rank, but not otherwise distinguished in point of doctrine. As he justly adds, a parallel of this system is found in Freemasonry ; the members of the first three degrees are not initiated into the grand secret of Masonry ; only in the Royal Arch are they informed of it. The four degrees above referred to were respectively called the " Faithful," the " Illuminate," the " Initiated," and the " Perfect." The Faithful received at his initiation a new or baptismal name, and this was engraved with a secret mark upon a white stone, (possibly alluded to in Rev. ii. 17), which he retained as a voucher of his membership. The usual sign was the Cross, though other signs were also employed

CHAPTER XI

PYTHAGORAS AND HIS SYSTEM

THERE can be little doubt in the mind of any student of such ancient beliefs as we are considering that the teaching of Pythagoras had a very great influence over a very wide area, so that the credit given to him for being responsible for bringing the principles of Freemasonry to Britain may not, after all, be quite traditionary, as some would have us believe.

The early life and surroundings of this great philosopher tended to educate him in mysticism.[1] The son of a wealthy jeweller of Samos, his parents, previous to his birth, consulted the Delphic Oracle, when they were promised " a son who would be useful to all men and throughout all time," and by the same oracular advice the parents went to Sidon, in Phœnicia, so that the predestined son might be conceived, formed, and born far from the disturbing influences of his own land. Before his birth he was consecrated to the worship of Apollo. When one year old, again acting on Delphic advice, he was taken to the temple of Adonai, in the Lebanon valley, for a blessing from the high priest there.

Up to the age of twenty he was accustomed to confer with the sages of his native town, Syros and Miletus. Then, in a wondrous vision, he saw pass before him the whole of his earlier years, and saw, as in his infancy, a white-bearded priest, uttering over him the words, often repeated to him by his mother, " O woman of Ionia, thy child shall be great in wisdom : but remember that, though the Greeks still possess the *science of the gods*, the *knowledge of* GOD can no longer be found elsewhere than in Egypt." He

[1] See Edouard Schuré, *The Great Initiates,* to whose section on Pythagoras I am indebted for much of the following.

determined to go at once to Egypt, and undergo initiation there, as advised. His initiation lasted in all twenty-two years, and he reached the summit of the Egyptian priesthood, realizing, not as a vain theory, but as something lived through, the doctrine of the Logos-Light, or of the Universal Word, and that of human evolution through seven planetary cycles. Then Cambyses, the Persian despot, invaded Egypt ; the temples of Memphis and Thebes were plundered, that of Ammon destroyed, and Pythagoras, with other Egyptian priests, was taken as a prisoner to Babylon. Here he was able to thoroughly study the knowledge in the possession of the magi, the heirs of Zoroaster, thereby enlarging his already vast horizon of doctrines and mysteries. After twelve years in Babylon, he returned to his native Samos, well-skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians and the Chaldeans, to commence the fulfilment of the Delphic prediction concerning him.

Pythagoras visited all the temples of Greece, being everywhere received as a master ; at the Eleusinian Mysteries, we are told, the hierophant himself gave up his office to him. Then he reached Delphi, that great centre of clairvoyant divination, practised there, as in the Egyptian temples, as an art and a science, but only to be used by the loftiest minds, and by them with a degree of religious sincerity and scientific thoroughness which raised it to the height of a real ministration. In conjunction with one of the high priestesses named Theoclea, Pythagoras instilled at Delphi a strengthening infusion of his own Egyptian and Chaldean knowledge, and once again Delphi became a centre of life and action.

After a year at Delphi, Pythagoras proceeded to what was then known as Greater Greece, founding his own celebrated Order at Croton, a town at the extremity of the Gulf of Tarentum, in Southern Italy. Here, with his teaching of esoteric doctrine to a chosen band of disciples, and also applying his principles to the education of youth and the life of the State, he produced a veritable revolution, according to Porphyry and Iamblichus,[1] who depict the commencement of his life there as being rather that of a magician than of a philosopher. With the ready aid of the wealthiest citizens

[1] See Appendix.

he founded his Temple of the Muses, a home of initiation into the highest principles of education as well as of religion, with separate sections for the two sexes, though women were not admitted to the inner mysteries revealed to men, as unnecessary, according to Pythagoras, for their better accomplishment of their household duties!

The Pythagorean system embraced three degrees, with a fourth as a supreme entrance into the highest knowledge. Here we are at once confronted with a probable source of our own Masonic ritual, wherein only those whose minds are thoroughly prepared become acquainted with the fact that the apparent finality of the third degree is only the commencement of new light in a fourth, the Royal Arch, with its magnificent interweaving of Egyptian and Chaldean symbolism.

The novitiate under Pythagoras commenced with a "Preparation" of two years, which might be prolonged to five, during which the novice, known as "The Listener," while developing the great gift of intuition, and exercising the strictest moral and hygienic discipline, was taught implicit obedience to, and firm belief in a Supreme Deity, and the necessity of subduing his passions and enlarging his mind if he truly desired to be of the benefit to himself and his fellow men for which he was created.

In the second degree, "Purification," he became acquainted "with the more hidden mysteries of Nature and science." His education became esoteric—from within—instead of as heretofore exoteric—from without: his real initiation now commenced. He had revealed to him a complete, rational exposition of occult doctrine, from its principles as contained in the mysterious science of numbers to the final consequences of universal evolution, the destiny and end of the human soul. The meaning of figures and letters, and geometric forms, were divulged to initiated adepts under the most solemn vows of secrecy. The transcendent meaning of the first problem of the Pythagorean system of theogony was then entered upon, the reason which brings it to pass that the great *Monad* contains all the small ones, and that all the numbers spring from the great Unity in movement.

Pythagoras taught that God, the indivisible substance, has accordingly for Number, the Unity which contains the Infinite; for Name, that of Father, Creator, or Eternal Masculine: for Sign, the living Fire, symbol of the Spirit, essence of the Whole. This great Monad acts as a creative *Dyad.* Immediately God manifests Himself He is double; indivisible essence and divisible substance: active, animating, masculine principle, and passive, feminine principle, or animated plastic matter. Accordingly the Dyad represented the union of the Eternal-Masculine and the Eternal-Feminine in God, the two essential and corresponding divine faculties. Thus the Monad represents the essence of God, the Dyad His generative and reproductive faculty. The latter brings the world into being, the visible unfolding of God in time and space. Now the real world is triple. For just as man is composed of three elements, which are distinct, though blended in one another—body, soul, and spirit; so the universe is divided into three concentric spheres: the natural, the human, and the divine world. The *Triad,* or *ternary law,* is accordingly the constitutive life of things, and the real key to life, the corner stone of esoteric science, which Pythagoras made the foundation of his system.

In the third degree, "Perfection," the initiates passed on to clairvoyant sleep and experiences, the mystery of the human soul, its transmigrations, its supreme importance, as man gradually acquires, by his own actions in a new spiritual existence, and a more free exercise of his intellect and will-power, a fuller consciousness of the divine, and his own connection therewith. Pythagoras called the spirit *the subtile chariot of the soul,* because it is destined to remove it from earth after death, to its celestial life beyond.

The fourth, the inner degree of all, reserved for the very select of his disciples, prepared by the teaching of Pythagoras in the former degrees for the ordinary trials of life, involved, as with the Indian and Persian sages, the complete subjugation of human will. To attain this meant the unification of three kinds of perfection, the realization of truth in intelligence, of virtue in soul, and of purity in body. Thus man becomes an adept, and, if he possesses sufficient energy, enters into possession of new faculties and powers. He

attains, in more or less degree, the power of healing, of seeing events taking place afar of, even of conveying himself in astral form to such places as his presence is needed in.

The teaching of Pythagoras may be thus summed up : an attempt to solve the mystery of the origin of good and evil; the necessity of assisting the law of destiny by endeavouring to perceive the difference between truth and error ; an inquiry into the diversity of human souls, conditions, and destinies ; true brotherhood of mankind, for we owe help, sympathy and charity to all ; for we are all of the same race, though we may have reached different stages ; the sacredness of suffering, and the divinity of sympathy with it ; the attainment of the rarest and loftiest of human ideals, the domination of intelligence over soul and instinct, that of the will over the whole being.

Such, then, were the doctrines of Pythagoras, confessedly derived from Egypt, but engrafted on an intelligence in infancy and boyhood surrounded by Delphic and Phœnician influences, matured by the learning of the Chaldees, developed amidst the revised wisdom of Eleusis and Delphi, for ultimate diffusion through all Western Europe.

Plato says that the Pythagoreans had a symbolism denoting Minerva by an equilateral triangle : Apollo by unity : Strife by the numeral two : justice by three, and the Supreme Being by four. Hippolytus says that "almost every heresy is indebted to the science of arithmetic for its invention of the Hebdomads, and its emanations of the Æons ; although the different teachers divide them variously, and change their names, doing in reality nothing more : in all which way of proceeding Pythagoras is their true master, he who first brought with him out of Egypt the use of numbers in such matters. . . ." The so-called "Pythagorean Numerals" of unknown antiquity, whether due or not to the sage of Croton, are said to be preserved to us by Boethius, "the last of the Romans," in his treatise on Arithmetic. That they would be the true parents of our Arabic numerals is at once apparent by inverting the figures standing for 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 0. Their forms look like certain Palmyrene letters, slightly modified. The Palmyrene is a very ancient Syriac alphabet, totally different in origin

from either Punic or Pehlevi. The ancient importance of this character is apparent from what Epiphanius says: "Manes divided his work into twenty-two books, being the number of letters in the Syriac alphabet. For most of the Persians use the Syriac character as well as the Persian, just as with us, many nations, although having a national alphabet of their own, yet employ the Greek."

I have alluded above to the probability of the teachings and system of Pythagoras having penetrated through Europe, which will account for the mention made of them as well as of their author in modern Freemasonry, more especially in the Lectures on the Three Degrees.

Iamblichus tells us that Pythagoras required his disciples to undergo a probationary period of three years, during which they were under close and constant observation with regard to their manners of life and general characteristics. After this period they were ordered [1] "to observe a quinquennial silence in order that he might experimentally know how they were affected as to continuance of speech, the subjugation of the tongue being the most difficult of all victories; as those have unfolded to us who instituted the Mysteries."

Iamblichus also tells us that a visitor to Pythagoras was Abaris the Hyperborean, who came to Crotona from a distant land in order that he might collect gold for his temple, and that Pythagoras learned much from him. Now this Abaris is considered by many distinguished writers on the Druids to have been identical with Abhras, who, according to ancient Irish legendary history, is stated to have travelled from Ireland to distant countries, and after a long time to have returned by way of Scotland, where he remained for seven years, bringing a new system of religion. From this Godfrey Higgins concludes [2] that the Druids were Pythagoreans.

Pythagoras has left us the following beautiful conception of the Deity: "God is neither the object of sense, nor subject to passions; but invisible, only intelligible, and supremely intelligent. In His Body he is like the Light, and in His Soul He resembles Truth. He is the Universal Spirit

[1] Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, Taylor's translation, p. 50.
[2] Godfrey Higgins, *The Celtic Druids*, p. 125.

that pervades and diffuses itself over all Nature. All things receive their life from Him. There is but One, Only GOD, Who is not, as some are apt to imagine, seated above the World beyond the Orb of the Universe ; but being Himself All in All, He sees all the beings that fill His immensity : the Only Principle, the Light of Heaven, the Father of all. He produces everything, He orders and disposes everything. He is the Reason, the Life and the Motion of all things."

"Alongside of the Eleusinia," says Mead,[1] "there existed certain private Mysteries not recognized by the State, the number of which subsequently increased enormously, so that almost every variety of Oriental Mystery-cultus found its adherents in Greece, as may be seen from a study of the religious associations among the Greeks known as Thiasi, Erani, and Orgeones ; among private communities and societies of this kind there were to be found naturally many undesirable elements, but at the same time they satisfied the needs of many who could derive no spiritual nourishment from the State religion."

"Among these private foundations were communities of rigid ascetics, men and women, who gave themselves entirely to holy living ; such people were said to live the 'Orphic life,' and were generally known as Orphics. These Orphic communities appear to have been the refugees of those who yearned after the religious life, and among them were the Pythagorean schools. Pythagoras did not establish something entirely new in Greece when he founded the famous school of Crotona ; he developed something already existing, and when his original school was broken up and its members had to flee they sought refuge among the Orphics. The Pythagorean schools disappear into the Orphic communities."

"It is in the Pythagorean tradition that we see the signs of what may be called the Philosophic Mysteries ; it is therefore in the best of the Orphic and Pythagorean traditions that we have to find the indications of the nature of the real Mysteries, and not in the political Eleusinia, or in the disorderly elements of the Oriental cults. In fact, the Orphics did much to improve the Eleusinia, and supported them as a most necessary means for educating the ordinary man

[1] Mead, *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, pp. 49-51. London, 1906.

towards a comprehension of the higher life. It stands to reason, however, that the Mysteries which satisfied the aspirations of Orphics and Pythagoreans were somewhat higher than the State Mysteries of the ordinary citizen. These Pythagoreans were famous throughout antiquity for the purity of their lives and the loftiness of their aims, and the Mysteries they regarded with such profound reverence must have been something beyond the Eleusinia, something to which the Eleusinia were but one of the outer approaches."

Pythagoras is said to have been initiated into the Egyptian, Chaldean, Orphic and Eleusinian Mysteries; at the same time he was one of the chief founders of Greek philosophy. His philosophy, however, was not a thing of itself, but the application of his intellect—especially of his mathematical genius—to the best in these Mystery traditions; he saw that it was necessary to attempt to lead the rapidly evolving intellectuality of Greece along its own lines to the contemplation of the inner nature of things; otherwise, in the joy of its freedom, it would get entirely out of hand and reject the truths of the ancient wisdom.

This tradition of Pythagoras being responsible for the introduction of Masonry from Phœnicia into Britain is strengthened, even if not confirmed, by a MS. in the Bodleian Library, prepared by the antiquary John Layland for King Henry VIII, and purporting to be a faithful copy of a still older MS. about 160 years more ancient, said to be in the handwriting of King Henry VI. This MS., which has as its title "Certayn Questyons, with Answers to the same, concerning the Mystery of Maçonrye," includes the following passages bearing on our subject:

Quest. Where did it begynne?

Ans. Ytt dydd begynne with the ffyrste menne yn the este, whych were before the ffyrst manne of the weste,[1]

[1] Preston has the following Notes on the MS. quoted. "Fyrste menne in the este, etc." It should seem by this that Masons believe there were men in the east before Adam, who is called the "ffyrste manne of the weste," and that arts and sciences began in the east. Some authors of great note for learning have been of the same opinion; and it is certain that Europe and Africa (which in respect to Asia), may be called western countries), were wild and savage, long after arts and politeness of manners were in great perfection in China and the Indies.

and comynge westlye, ytt hath broughte herwyth alle comfortes to the wylde and comfortlesse.

Quest. Who dydd brynge ytt westlye ?

Ans. The Venetians,[2] whoo beynge grate merchaundes, comed ffyrste ffromme the este ynn Venetia, for the commodyte of marchaundysynge beithe este and weste bey the redde and myddlonde sees.

Quest. How comede ytt in Engelonde ?

Ans. Peter Gower a Grecian,[2] journeyyde ffor kunnynge yn Egypte and in Syria, and yn everyche londe whereas the Venetians hadde plaunted maconrye, and wynnynge entraunce yn al lodges of maçonnes he lerned muche, and retournedde, and woned in Grecia Magna, wacksynge and becommynge a mighty wyseacre, a gratelye renowned, and her he framedde a grate loge at Groton,[4] and maked manye maçonnes, some whereoffe dyde journeye yn Frannce, and maked manye maçonnes ther, wherefromme, yn processe of tyme, the arte passed in Engelonde.

[1] "The Venetians, etc." In the times of monkish ignorance it is no wonder that the Phœnicians should be mistaken for the Venetians. Or perhaps, if the people were not taken one for the other, similitude of sound might deceive the clerk who first took down the examination. The Phœnicians were the greatest voyagers among the ancients, and were in Europe thought to be the inventors of letters, which perhaps they brought from the East with other arts. *Illustrations of Masonry*, p. 112.

[2] Peter Gower, says Preston in his Note on this passage, must be another mistake of the writer. "I was puzzled at first to guess who Peter Gower could be, the name being perfectly English ; or how a Greek should come by such a name ; but as soon as I thought of Pythagoras, I could scarce forbear smiling, to find that philosopher had undergone such a metempsychosis he never dreamt of. We need only consider the French pronunciation of his name, 'Pythagore,' that is 'Petagore,' to conceive how easily such a mistake may be made by an unlearned clerk. That Pythagoras travelled for knowledge into Egypt, etc., is known to all the learned ; and that he was initiated into several different orders of priests, who in those days kept all their learning secret from the vulgar, is as well known. Pythagoras also made every geometrical theorem a secret, and admitted only such to the knowledge of them as had undergone first a five years' silence. He is supposed to be the inventor of the 47th proposition of the first book of Euclid, for which, in the joy of his heart, he is said to have sacrificed a hecatomb. See his life by Dion Hal."

[3] Grecia Magna, a part of Italy so called, in which the Greeks had settled a large colony.

[4] Groton is the name of a place in England, but the place here meant Crotona, a city of Grecia Magna, which in the time of Pythagoras was very populous. Preston's *Illustrations of Masonry*, pp. 113, 114.

CHAPTER XII

THE ISMAELI AND THEIR VARIOUS BRANCHES.—ORIGIN OF THE ASSASSINS

"We have seen," says Taylor,[1] "how greatly Mohammedanism was corrupted by its admixture with the religion of the ancient Persians; but there were certain sects among the Persians that professed doctrines more absurd and more pernicious than those of the Magians; which, in fact, taught principles destructive of morality and social order. From these sprung several impostors, who seduced crowds of followers, by appealing to the depraved passions of human nature, teaching the indifference of actions, community of women, and the equal distribution of property."

Hakim Ibn-Hashem occupied the position of under-secretary to Abu Moslem, Governor of the Province of Khorassan. From the very first period of Islamism, Khorassan had been the fruitful parent of heresies, including the Ravendi who taught the doctrines of the transmigration of soul, and the successive incarnations of the Deity, and the Zendics whose principle it was to believe nothing. Abu Moslem believed in the Ravendic creed; Hashem adopted the same, and resolved to turn it to profit. Being very deformed, he knew that his figure would prevent his being believed if he proclaimed himself a Bodhisatwa, so he covered himself with a long silver veil, declaring that no mortal could gaze upon the effulgence of his face, and live. Hence he is usually alluded to as Al Mokanna, "The Veiled Prophet." He appeared in the reign of the Caliph Al Mohdi, the father of the renowned Haroun-al-Raschid, in A.D. 778 By some,

[1] *History of Mohammedanism*, p. 168

apparently, clever juggling performances he persuaded his followers that he had the power of working miracles, and so in a few months he collected a large army, and was able to garrison several strong fortresses. In particular, he is said to have caused the appearance of the moon to rise out of a well for several nights in succession, whence he is called by the Persians " Sazendeh Mah," the " Moon-maker." Being closely besieged, and finding escape hopeless, he first poisoned the entire garrison and his own family, and then plunged into a vessel containing a corrosive liquid, hoping that from the disappearance of his body it might be thought that he had been taken up into heaven. Notwithstanding the assertions of one of his concubines, who had escaped by hiding herself, and who had seen all that he had done, many believed in the divinity of Al Mokanna, and clothed themselves in white, to show their hostility to the Abasside Caliphs, whose distinctive colour was black.

A still more formidable heretic and rebel appeared in Irak during the caliphate of Al Mamoun (A.D. 10) ; this was Baber, who maintained his ground for twenty years, during which time he is said to have murdered two hundred and fifty thousand Mohammedans in cold blood.

Another fierce enemy of the Mussulmans appeared in Irak during the caliphate of Al Mohammed (A.D. 891). This founder of a new sect was a poor labourer, named Karmat, to whose followers, the Karmatians, the Nusari seem more or less allied. The following account of Karmat is given by De Sacy, who says he quotes from Bibars Mansoori, and that it is also given by the great Arab chronicler, Ibn-Atheer :—

A man of the province of Khorassan came and established himself in the territory of Cufa, called Nahrein. He there led a most ascetic life, teaching that prayers should be said fifty times a day. Being taken ill, he was carefully attended by a man named Hamdan Karamita, whom he taught his religion, at the same time selecting another twelve of his followers as his apostles. The sect spread rapidly. Haidsam, the governor of those parts, imprisoned him, but he escaped through the friendly offices of a girl belonging to the gaoler, and then declared that he had been

released by an angel. Fearing for his life, however, he fled into Syria, and assumed the name of the man who had showed him hospitality.

About the same period, in the time of Mohammed son of Ismael, a son of the Imaum Djaafar as-Sadik previously mentioned, there arose Abdullah son of Maimoun Kaddah, who, seeing the failure of Al Mokannah and Baber, determined to proceed in a different way rather than by open war. He knew that men rarely resign all preconceived opinions at once; he therefore resolved to form lodges, or assemblies, in which the members should pass through seven grades, each having its own peculiar system of doctrines. Missionaries, called Dais, propagated the secret doctrine taught by Abdullah, and it is said that the founder of the Karmatians was converted by one of them. This, however, must be regarded as very doubtful, because the Karmatian system was not identical with the Ismaelian, though very like it; and also because Karmat preached obedience to the ideal Massum, and not to Imaum Ismael.

De Sacy supposes that before this time the sect of the Ismaeli may have existed, but that it was not till the time of Abdullah, which he gives as A.D. 863, that the doctrines of the sect were reduced to a system. He thinks that till then they were only an ordinary sect of Schiites, but that Abdullah introduced materialism and general infidelity.

Nowairi [1] says that Abdullah son of Maimoun was obliged to fly successively from Ahwaz, near the head of the Persian Gulf, and Busrah and took refuge at Salameeh in Syria, a town on the borders of the desert, but situated in a fertile territory, a few miles south-east of Hamah. He died there, and his son Ahmed became chief of the Ismaeli. He sent Hosein Ahwazi, one of his dais, into Irak. Hosein arrived in the cultivated territory of Cufa, called by the Arabs Sawad, and there found Hamdan son of Ashath. He initiated him into his religion, and when dying named him

[1] De Sacy (see *Exposé of Religion of the Druses*, vol. i. Introd. p. 73) places great reliance on Nowairi, who takes his facts from Aboul-Hasan, said to be separated by only five generations from Mohammed son of Ismael, from whom he claimed descent. He says that Makrisi and Nowairi derived from one source in all probability, for they employ nearly always the same expressions, and it is possible to correct the text of the one from that of the other.

as his successor. According to Nowairi, Hamdan was named Karmat, from the name of his ox. Others say that the word means a man with short legs, who makes short steps. Others that it comes from the Nabathean language, in which it is Karamita, and hence Karmat. Thus it appears that the Karmatians took their rise from the Ismaeli, as Hamdan Karmat sent a dai to Salameeh, who found that the house of Maimoun Kaddah were really set on aggrandising themselves, rather than honouring Mohammed son of Ismael, which Karmat turned to his own advantage in the propagation of his own doctrines.

Abdullah son of Maimoun divided his system into seven degrees after the fashion of the Pythagorean and Indian philosophers, into which his followers were initiated gradually. The last degree, according to Von Hammer,[1] inculcated the vanity of all religion—the indifference of actions, which, according to Abdullah's teaching, are neither visited with recompense nor chastisement, either now or hereafter. This alone was the path of truth and right, all else imposture and error. He appointed emissaries, whom he dispatched to enlist disciples, and to initiate them, according to their capacity for libertinism or turbulence, in some or all of the degrees, the pretensions of the descendants of Mohammed son of Ismael served him as a political mask; these his missionaries asserted as partisans, while they were secretly but the apostles of crime and impiety."

These degrees were afterwards increased to nine by the Western Ismaeli, and are described by Macrisi, as they were taught in the Lodge at Cairo.[2]

The first degree was the longest and most difficult of all, as it was necessary to inspire the pupil with the most implicit confidence in the knowledge of his teacher, and to incline him to take that most solemn oath, by which he bound himself to the secret doctrine with blind faith and unconditional obedience. For this purpose every possible expedient was

[1] Von Hammer, *History of the Assassins*, p. 29.

[2] This is given by Von Hammer, pp. 34 ff., who says "This account which Makrisi has preserved, concerning the promulgation of these degrees of initiation, forms a very precious and the most ancient document on the history of the secret societies of the East, in whose steps those of the West afterwards trod."

adopted to perplex the mind by the many contradictions of positive religion and reason, to render the absurdities of the Koran still more involved by the most insidious questions and most subtle doubts, and to point from the apparent literal signification to a deeper sense, which was properly the kernel, as the former was but the husk. The more ardent the curiosity of the novice, the more resolute was the refusal of the master to afford the least solution to these difficulties, until he had taken the most unrestricted oath; on this he was admitted to the second degree. This inculcated the recognition of divinely appointed Imaums, who were the source of all knowledge. As soon as the faith in them was well established, the third degree taught their number, which could not exceed the holy seven: for, as God had created seven heavens, seven earths, seven seas, seven planets, seven colours, seven musical sounds, and seven metals, so had he appointed seven of the most excellent of his creatures as Revealed Imaums: these were Ali, Hassan, Hosein, Ali Zeyn-il-Abaideen, Mohammed-al-Behir, Djaafar-as-Sadik, and Ismael his son as the last and seventh.

The fourth grade taught that, since the beginning of the world there had been seven divine law-givers, or speaking apostles of God, of whom each had always, by the command of heaven, altered the doctrine of his predecessor; that each of these had seven co-adjutors, who succeeded each other in the epoch from one speaking law-giver to another, but who, as they did not appear manifestly, were called the mutes (Samit). The first of these mutes was named Sas or Asas, meaning foundation, the seat, as it were, of the ministers of the speaking prophet, Natik. These seven speaking prophets, with their seven Asas were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, and Ismael the son of Djaafar, who, as the last, was called Sahib-ez-Zeman, the lord of the time, and Kaim-ez-Zeman, or chief of the age. Their seven assistants were Seth, Shem, Ishmael son of Abraham, Aaron and afterwards Joshua, Simeon or Simon Peter, Ali, and Mohammed son of Ismael.

It is evident from this dexterous arrangement, which gained for the Ismaeli the name of "Seveners," that as they named only the first of the mute divine envoys in

each prophetic period, and since Mohammed son of Ismael had been dead only a hundred years, the teachers were at full liberty to present to those whose progress stopped at this degree whomsoever they pleased as one of the mute prophets of the current age.

The fifth degree must necessarily render the credibility of the doctrine more manifest to the minds of the hearers. For this reason it taught that each of the seven mute prophets had twelve apostles for the extension of the true faith; for the number twelve is the most excellent after seven: hence the twelve signs of the zodiac, the twelve months, the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve bones of the fingers of each hand, the thumb excepted, and so on.

After these five degrees, the precepts of Islam were examined; and in the sixth it was shown that all positive legislation must be subordinate to the general and philosophical. The dogmas of Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras were adduced as proofs and laid down as axioms. This degree was very tedious, and only when the acolyte was fully penetrated with the wisdom of the philosophers was he granted admission to the seventh, where he passed from philosophy to mysticism. This was the Oriental mystic theology, and the doctrine of unity which the Sufees have exhibited in their works. In the eighth degree the positive precepts of religion were again brought forward to fall to dust by all that preceded; then was the pupil fully enlightened as to the superfluity of all apostles and prophets, the non-existence of heaven and hell, the indifference of all actions, for which there is neither reward nor punishment, neither in this world or the next; and thus was he matured for the ninth and last degree, to become the blind instrument of all the passions of unbridled thirst of power. To believe nothing, and to dare all, formed, in two words, the sum of this system, which annihilated every principle of religion and morality, and had no other object than to execute ambitious designs with suitable ministers, who, daring all, and honouring nothing, since they consider everything a cheat and nothing forbidden, are the best tools of an infernal policy.

It will be very evident, from the above description, that

neither Von Hammer, nor Makrisi, from whom he copied, could imagine a secret society being anything but vile, immoral and dangerous to society at large!

The doctrines of the Karmatians, taking them to be a branch of the early Ismaeli, are thus given by D'Herbelot.[1]

"Their founder taught his disciples to make fifty prayers a day and allowed them to eat things forbidden by Mussulmans. He allegorized the precepts of the Koran, giving out prayer to be the symbol of obedience to the Imaum; fasting to be merely the symbol of silence and secrecy with respect to strangers who were not of their sect; and that fidelity to the Imaum was figured by the precept which forbids fornication, so that those who reveal the precepts of their religion, and who do not obey their Sheikh blindly fall into the crime called 'zinah.' Instead of the tenth part of their property which Mussulmans gave to the poor, they were to set apart the fifth part for the Imaum."

Von Hammer speaks in a similar way of Karmat[2]:

"His doctrine, in addition to the circumstances of its forbidding nothing, and declaring everything allowable and indifferent, meriting neither reward nor punishment, undermined more particularly the basis of Mohammedanism, by declaring that all its commands were allegorical, and merely a disguise of political precepts and maxims. Moreover, all was to be referred to the blameless and irreproachable Imaum Maassum, (preserved from error) as the model of a prince whom, though he had occupied no existing throne, they pretended to seek, and declared war against bad and good princes, without distinction, in order that, under the pretext of contending for a better, they might be able to unravel at once the thickly interwoven web of religion and government. The injunction of prayer meant nothing but obedience to the Imaum Maassum; alms, the tithes to be given to him; fasting, the preservation of the political secret regarding the Imaum of the family of Ismael. Everything depended on the interpretation 'Terwil,' without which the whole word of the Koran, 'Tensil,' had neither meaning nor value. Religion did not consist

[1] Article on Karmatians, Bib. Orient.
[2] *History of the Assassins*, pp. 29, 30.

in external observances, 'Iz-Zahir,' but in the internal feeling, 'Il-Batin.'"

Ibn-Atheer, who lived between about A.D. 1159 to 1231, according to Nowairi, describes a book of the Karmatians, from which the following is an extract:—

"In the name of GOD, the compassionate, the merciful. Says Il-Faradj, son of Othman, of the village of Nusrana, that there appeared to him in human form the Messiah, who is the Word of GOD, who is the Guide, and he is Ahmed, son of Mohammed, son of Hanafeyah, of the sons of Ali, and he is also Gabriel the angel, and he said to him: 'Thou art the true one; thou art the camel that keepest wrath against the infidels; thou art the ox that bearest the sins of the true believers; thou art the spirit; thou art John son of Zachariah.'"

It is said also that Karmat taught his disciples to make four inclinations: two before sunrise, and two before sunset, or according to Bibars Mansoori, two after sunset. The following words are also ascribed to him: first quoting a passage from the Koran: "They will ask you of the new moons: they are the epochs fixed for men." He thus allegorizes it: "In the exterior sense it refers to years, chronology, months, days; but in the inner sense it refers to my faithful friends, who have made known my ways to my servants."

Among other things he commanded a fast two days in the year, at the feasts of Mihrdjan and of Nurooz[1]; he forbade the wine of the palm-tree, and permitted the use of that made from the grape; he prescribed the abstaining from the complete ablution according to the rite called Ghasl, for a pollution, and directed the being contented with the ablution called Wodu, as it is practised before prayer. He allowed the killing of all that should take up arms against him; but forbade the eating of any animal with tusks or claws.

After about A.D. 989 not much is heard of the Karmatians of Irak and Syria, but they were found in Bahrein till A.D. 1037–8, and at Mooltan in India still later.

When about A.D. 910 the dynasty of the Fatimite[2]

[1] See Appendix, p. 310.
[2] So called on account of their descent from Fatima, wife of Ali.

Caliphs was founded at Kairwan, the ancient Cyrene, by Obeid-allah, who claimed descent from the Imaum Ismael, the Ismaeli appear to have divided into two branches, the Eastern and Western. The former seem to have been identical with the Nusairi, or as they were called by Frank writers, the Assassins ; the latter developed into a new sect, called the Druses.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ASSASSINS

ABOUT the time when the Western or Egyptian Ismaeli were beginning to decline, a new branch of the sect appeared in Northern Persia, which was first called the Eastern Ismaeli, but afterwards became more celebrated under the title of The Assassins. The founder of this branch was Hassan-Ibn-Mohammed-as-Sabah, who was a native of Rey, or Rha, the ancient Ragae. His father Ali was a distinguished Schiite of Khorassan. Although regarded with suspicion by Orthodox Mussulmans, he asserted that he was a native of Cufa, and a devoted adherent to the Sunnite creed; as a proof he sent his son Hassan to be educated by the most celebrated Orthodox doctor of the age. Hassan was originally a believer in the twelve Imaums, but asserted that during an illness he had been converted to the Ismaeli doctrines, of which the Caliphs of Egypt were the head. He journeyed into Egypt, where he was gladly welcomed by the reigning Caliph, Mostanzer. After the death of this Caliph, Hassan returned to Persia, by way of Syria, and gained possession, by force and stratagem, of an impregnable mountain-fastness called from its position Alamoot, that is "the eagle's nest." This was in A.D. 1090. Pretending that he was the *Huddjah*, or demonstration of the Invisible Imaum, he procured followers among the pre-existing Ismaeli sect, and succeeded in persuading his followers that to die for the Imaum or the Order was to procure certain felicity. He gained castle after castle in Persia, and soon obtained great power, inspiring terror in the hearts of all by the sudden assassination of caliphs and viziers. About A.D. 1100, the Assassins appeared in Syria,

existing almost independently in the mountains of Summak, the southern part of the Nusairi range. According to Dheheby[1]: "The Ismaeli of Alamoot sent into Syria, in the year 1107 or after, one of their missionaries. Many adventures happened to him, until he made himself master of several fortresses in the mountain of Sanak, which *belonged to the Ansaireeh*."

"The Assassins," says Taylor, "were neither a nation nor a dynasty; they were simply an Order, or confraternity, similar to that of the Knights Templar, or the modern Freemasons. Their Grand-Master took the simple title of Sheikh, usually accorded to the heads of all the Arab tribes; the name of the *Sheikh-ul-Jebal*, or Chief of the Mountain, soon became formidable throughout Asia. In Europe, the word 'Sheikh' was translated 'old man,' a signification which the word will bear; and the name of 'The Old Man of the Mountain' was pronounced with an instinctive shudder even on the coast of the Atlantic."[2]

Hitherto, says Ameer Ali, in his valuable *Short History of the Saracens*, a standard work on the subject, the Ismaeli had only *Masters* and *Fellows*; namely, the *Dais*, or emissaries, who, being initiated into all the grades of the secret doctrine, enlisted proselytes; and the *Rafik*, who, gradually entrusted with its principles, formed the bulk of the secret society. Hassan saw at once that for the purpose of carrying out his project with security and energy, a third class was needed, composed of agents who would be mere blind and fanatical tools in the hands of their superiors who would yield implicit obedience to the master's orders, without regard to consequences; these agents were called *Fedais*, that is the Devoted.

The Grand-Master of this murderous brotherhood was called "our lord" *Syedna* or *Sidna* (the *Sydney* of the Crusaders) and commonly *Sheikh-ul-Jabal*, the "Old Man (or Lord) of the Mountain." The *Fedais* formed his bodyguard, and were the excutioners of his deadly orders.

Immediately under the Grand-Master came the *Dai-ul-Kabir*, the "Grand Prior," and each of the three provinces to which the power of the Order extended, namely, Jabal,

[1] In an Arabic MS. quoted in the *Journal Asiatique*, May, 1854.
[2] *History of Mohammedanism*, p. 179.

Kuhistan, and Syria, was ruled by a "Grand Prior." Beneath them were the Initiated Masters, the *Dais* who acted as nuncios, and enlisted proselytes. The Fellows or Companions (*Rafik*) were those who were advancing to the Mastership, through the several grades of initiation into the secret doctrine. The devoted murderers, the *Fedais*, came last, and the *Lasik*, or Aspirants, seem to have been the Novices, or lay brethren. From the uninitiated subjects of the Order strict observance of the religious duties of Islam was expected; from the devoted satellites was demanded only blind subjection. The initiated worked with their heads, and led the arms of the *Fedais* in execution of the orders of the Sheikh, who with the pen guided the daggers.

The Assassins by degrees made themselves masters of many of the strongest fortresses in the mountainous tracts of Northern Persia, Irak, and Syria, and pursued the best men of Islam with their daggers.

It was at this period that the storm of savage fanaticism which in the annals of Christendom is called "the Holy Wars" burst in all its fury over Western Asia. "The Crusades form," says a clever writer, "one of the maddest episodes in history. Christianity hurled itself at Mohammedanism in expedition after expedition for nearly three centuries, until failure brought lassitude, and superstition itself was undermined by its own labours. Europe was drained of men and money, and threatened with social bankruptcy, if not with annihilation. Millions perished in battle, hunger, or disease, and every atrocity the imagination can conceive disgraced the warriors of the Cross."

But a history of the Crusades does not enter into the scope of this work, fascinating as is the subject. We have traced the Assassins as the originators of the present Nusairis, and now proceed to give a few more particulars of that sect.

"If the reader will take any map of Syria which has some pretensions to accuracy," says the Rev. Samuel Lyde,[1] "and will look at the seacoast, he will find in the parallel of latitude 35° 30′ the town of Ladikeeh (Latakia), the Laodicea of Seleucus Nicator, celebrated now for its exports

[1] *Asian Mystery*, pp. 1 ff.

of the tobacco grown in the neighbouring mountains. These mountains, which are the special abode of the Nusairis,[1] are separated on the south from the Lebanon range by the entrance into Hamath, a valley through which run the roads from Tripoli to Hamah, and from Tartoos to Hums, also the ancient river Eleutherus, the Nahr-il-Chebeer of to-day. To the north they are separated from the mountains, of which Mount Cassius forms the conspicuous western termination, by a pass and valley, over and through which runs the road from Ladikeeh to Aleppo. But though these mountains are so almost exclusively inhabited by the Nusairis as to be called by their name, yet the Nusairi population of Syria is by no means confined to them. They also occupy the plain which stretches on the west of the mountains, the wide plain which stretches east to Hums and Hamah, in the district south of the Nahr-il-Chebeer, along the valley of the Orontes, and in Antioch they form a large element of the population. Leaving Syria, for a moment, and crossing the ancient bay of Issus, they abound in the district of Adana and Tarsoos, the ancient Tarsus, and in southern Syria; near the ancient Cæsarea Philippi, are several Nusairi villages."

As regards an approximate idea of the Nusairi population in Syria, it is impossible to estimate whether it has much diminished under Turkish mis-rule during the past fifty years, but we may doubtless consider that it has lessened considerably. About 1856 Dr. Vandyck, of the American Board of Missions at Beyrout, while giving the number of the Druses as 100,000 gave that of the Ismaeeli and Nusairis together as 200,000, of which the largest proportion would be Nusairis. Writing in the *Missionary Herald* for March 1841, Dr. Thomson, another American missionary, said: "Mr. Barker assures me that about one-third of the inhabitants of Tartoos are Ansaireeh, and that they abound not only in Djebel Bailan, above Scanderoon, but in the mountains of Anatolia. This corresponds with the unvarying testimony of the people themselves, who also

[1] By Arab writers they are called the "An-Nusaireeyah." Lyde calls them "Ansaireeh," as the nearest English imitation of the pronunciation of the people themselves. But I am calling them throughout Nusairis.

say that their sect extends to Djebel Sindjar, and even to Persia. They are several times more numerous than the Druses, but then they are more widely dispersed. Their number cannot be less than 200,000, and most intelligent natives place it much higher. The largest number of them occupy the plain and mountains of Ladikeeh, which are in consequence called Djebel-il-Ansaireeh. Their villages are also very numerous in the region called Safeetah, above Tartoos, and in Husn and Akkar. They also comprise one-third of the inhabitants of Antioch, and abound in the mountains above it."

Lieut. The Hon. F. Walpole, R.N., an English Freemason who travelled in the East, including a visit to Nineveh, in 1850–1, has supplied us with many interesting details regarding the Nusairis in the work he published on his return to England.[1] Though somewhat mysterious in his account of how many of their secrets he acquired, it is evident he underwent a certain ceremony of initiation whilst resident amongst them. He says:—

"Though acquainted with many Ansayrii, high in their degree, I must confess as yet to not having discovered one trace of their belief, all my inquiries being met by, 'I am one of your faith.' An Ansayri assured me to-day they never taught their religion to their women. 'Would you have us teach them,' he said, 'whom we use, our holy faith?' The Ansayrii are now, also, from what I could gather, divided into several sects: for interpreting to him several tenets of Zoroaster, he appeared to be struck with my knowledge; they always parry me by 'Your faith, my lord Frankmason?' Finding these remarks written of how, at first, I despaired of ever penetrating their secret, I must own the progress I have made now appears incredible even to myself, and their simplicity also in not detecting my gradual increase of knowledge; but from my first arrival here my whole powers were turned to this, and, leaving all plan until circumstances opened, I gradually advanced; and now with all truth I may say, that what I do not know, I have but to ask them to teach me. I early found that one deception, hardly justifiable, was

[1] Walpole, *The Ansayrii*, vol. iii., pp. 64, 342 ff. London, 1851.

necessary: namely, not understanding any question asked me which I could not answer. The Ibn Arabs, or sons of the country, says 'the Franks are fools' but they are no match for the *nonchalance* and *sang froid* of the European; and gradually I whetted the curiosity of the Ansayrii by a pretended reserve. 'Ya Sheik, you are happy; you have your knowledge, I have mine; I would say, let us each keep what he has got, and let us talk of the weather, the crops, of trade.' This persevered in, they could not stand, so they at last gave in, and would tell me. Then, again, several sitting close around me, they would talk over a question to be asked me; as if I, all listless, and inattentive, as I seemed, was not all ears, all tension, to fathom their meaning. For this I wandered as a beggar, endured hardships more than I should like to tell; cold, hunger, and fatigue more than I trust others will know; I have been beaten, hurt with stones, yet the result more than repays me. That alone, without means, without powers to buy or bribe, I have penetrated a secret, the enigma of ages—have dared alone to venture where none have been—when the Government, with five hundred soldiers, could not follow; and, better than all, have gained esteem among the race condemned as savages, and feared as robbers and assassins.[1]

"The lower classes are initiated into the principles of their religion, but not its more mystical, or higher parts; they are taught to obey their chiefs without question, without hesitation, and to give to the Sheik abundantly at feasts and religious ceremonies; and above all to die a thousand deaths sooner than reveal the same faith he inherits from his race.

"In their houses they place two small windows over the door. This is in order that if a birth and a death occur at the same moment, the coming and the parting spirit may not meet. In rooms dedicated to hospitality, several square holes are left, so that each spirit may come or depart without meeting another.

[1] It is much to be regretted that, so far as is known, Lieutenant Walpole never disclosed, at any rate for publication, any other details as to his experiences amongst the Ansayrii whilst being initiated into their secret rites. Evidently, they were so near akin to his own Masonic experiences, that his former Obligations would still be considered binding upon him.

" Like the Mahometans, they practise the rite of circumcision, performing the rite at various ages, according to the precocity of the child.

" When a candidate is pronounced ready for initiation, his tarboosh is removed, and a white cloth wrapped round his head. He is then conducted into the presence of the sheiks of religion. The chiefs deliver a lecture, cautioning him against ever divulging their great and solemn secret. ' If you are under the sword, the rope, or the torture, die, and smile, you are blessed.' He then kisses the earth three times before the chief, who continues telling him the articles of their faith. On rising, he teaches him a sign, and delivers three words to him. This completes the first lesson.

" The Ansayrii have signs and questions. By the one they salute each other, by the other they commence an examination as to whether a man is one of them or not, if they do not know him personally. But these signs are little used, and known only to a few, as the dress, etc., clearly indicates them to each other, and almost each one knows all the chiefs, at least, by sight.

" They believe in the transmigration of souls. Those who in this life do well, are hospitable and follow their faith, become stars ; the souls of others return to the earth, and become Ansayrii again until purified, they fly to rest ; the souls of bad men become Jews, Christians, and Turks ; while the souls of those who believe not become pigs, and other beasts. One evening, sitting with a dear old man, a high sheik, his boys were round him : I said, ' Speak : where are the sons of your youth ? these are the children of your old age.' ' My son,' he said, looking up, ' is there ; nightly he smiles upon me, and invites me to come.' "

CHAPTER XIV

THE MOHAMMEDAN CREED; FROM AN ORIGINAL ARABIC CONFESSION OF FAITH

During the course of our consideration of the Creeds of the Syrian secret sects, and their variations from the ordinary Moslem Creed, references have to be so frequently made to the latter that it is necessary to give its clauses. The following condensation of the Mohammedan Creed is taken from Taylor's *History of Mohammedanism*, a text-book on the subject.

The Creed of which the following is a translation, was originally compiled by a Mohammedan doctor of the law, who belonged to the Sunnite sect, and contains a summary of the doctrines generally received by Orthodox Mussulmen; it was published in 1705, by Adrian Reland; with a Latin translation, unfortunately too literal for general use, and from the Latin it was translated into English and French. Hottinger, who edited the Creed in Hebrew characters, declared that there were in it, "precepts, Ethical, Political, and Domestic, worthy of Christianity itself." Some notes, explaining more fully the different articles, will be found in the Appendix.

In the Name of GOD, The Most Merciful.—Praise be unto God, who has led us into the Faith, and has appointed it as a signet by which is obtained the entrance of the celestial paradise; and as a veil between us and eternal dwelling in flames. And may the favour and praise of God be upon Mohammed, the best of men, the Guide, who leads his followers into the right way—favour, perpetual and ever-increasing, from generation to generation.

Here begins the description of Faith and its explanation. Know that Faith is the foundation of Islamism, as the prophet Mohammed has pronounced, to whom may God be kind, and grant plenary salvation. Islamism rests on five foundations: of which the first is the Confession of God, that there is no other God beside Him, and that Mohammed is His delegated prophet; the second is, the offering up of prayer at stated periods; the third, the bestowing of alms; the fourth, fasting during the month Ramadhan; and the fifth, is the pilgrimage to Mecca, which every person possessing the power is bound to perform.

But this is the confession which we call Faith.

Be it known, that every person possessing capacity for it, is bound to believe in God—in His angels—in His books—in His prophets—in the last day, and in the absolute decree, and predetermination of the Most Highest, respecting both good and evil.

But Faith consists in this, that every man is persuaded in his soul of the truth of these things, and Confession is the proof of this belief by external indications.

Of Faith in God

Faith in God is the real belief in the soul, and confession by the tongue, that God is a supreme existence, true, permanent, a very essence, eternal, without beginning and without end, Who has no form, or figure, is limited by no place, has no equal, compeer, or similarity, no motion or change; no separation, division, weariness, or casualty. He is removed from conjunction with any other being, self-existent, intelligent, potent, of independent volition, hearing all our words, seeing all our deeds, the source of speech, the maker, the creator, the sustainer, the producer, the author of life and death; giving a beginning to all things, causing to all a resurrection; judging, decreeing, correcting, ruling, prohibiting, directing to rectitude and leading to error; a retributive judge, rewarding, punishing, merciful, victorious.

And these attributes are eternally inherent in His essence throughout all ages, without separation or changes,

and these attributes are not God, nor yet are they different from Him. And thus every attribute is conjoined with Him, as life with knowledge, or knowledge with power.

But these are the attributes, life, knowledge, power, will, hearing, sight, the power of communication, eternity both as regards a beginning and an end, action, creation, support, production, formation, the gift of life, the message of death, the first origin of things, their restoration, wisdom, predestination, direction to good, seduction to evil, retribution, reward, punishment, grace and victory.

And with these noble and precious attributes, God, the Most Highest, is endowed; and whoever denies any of these attributes, or doubts concerning them, or any of them, is doubtlessly an infidel.

Preserve us, O God, from the sin of infidelity!

Of Angels

For a right belief concerning angels, there is required a persuasion of the mind and confession of the tongue, that there exist servants to the supreme God, who are called Angels or messengers, free from sin, near to God, who perform all His commands, and are never disobedient. But they have pure and subtile bodies, created of fire; neither is there among them any difference of sexes, or carnal appetites, and they have neither father nor mother. Also they are endowed with different forms, and severally preside over ministrations. Some stand, some incline downwards, some sit, or adore, with a lowered forehead; others sing hymns and praises of God, or laud and extol their Creator, or ask pardon for human offences. Some of them record the deeds of men, and guard over the human race; others support the throne of God, or go about it, and perform other works which are pleasing to the Deity.

But it is necessary to believe in them, although a person may not know their names or specific attributes; and to embrace them in love, is one of the necessary conditions of faith. And to hate them collectively or individually, is an act of infidelity.

But if anyone confesses that angels exist, but asserts

that they have sexual differences, it is an act of infidelity. Or if he confesses that there are angels, and that they have no sexual differences, but declares that he does not repose trust in them, or love them, he is to be esteemed an infidel.

Preserve us, O God, from the sin of infidelity !

Of the Divine Books

Faith in the books of God is this, that we are persuaded in our mind, and confess with our tongue, that those illustrious books are from God, which He sent down from heaven to His Prophet which demission was made without creation (the Koran is eternal [1]), without production. In them are contained the commands and prohibitions of God—His edicts—His promises, and His threatenings—His declaration of what is lawful, and what is unlawful—and His information of His retributive justice, both as regards rewards and punishments. All these books are the very word of God, the Most Highest, which is read by the tongue, guarded in the volumes, and written in the hearts of men. But this word of God is distinct from those letters and vocal sounds, and yet these letters and vocal sounds are metaphorically called the Word of God, because they indicate God's real word. In the same way that we call our expressions—our words, because they indicate what is truly our word. As the poet says :

> Our real language dwells within our breasts,
> The tongue is but an index to the heart.

These things God well knows.

The books are one hundred and four in number ; of which God, the Most Highest, sent down ten to Adam ; fifty to Seth ; thirty to Idris ; ten to Abraham ; one to Moses, which is the Thorah (law) or Pentateuch ; one to Issa (Jesus), which is the Engil (Evangelium, or Gospel) ; one to David, and this is the Book of Psalms ; and one to Mohammed, which is the Forkan (Koran). He who denies these volumes, or doubts concerning them, or a part of them, or a chapter, or a versicle, or a word of them, is certainly an infidel.

Preserve us, O God, from the sin of infidelity !

[1] See Appendix, "Creation of the Koran."

Concerning the Ambassadors of God

Faith in the ambassadors of God demands that we recognise in the heart, and confess with the tongue, that God, the Most Highest, has appointed prophets—ambassadors chosen from among men, and sent as messengers to men—preachers of eternal truth, to whom implicit faith and confidence is due, who command and forbid certain things (as they are inspired), and bear to men the revealed edicts of the Deity, and make manifest to them his constitutions and decrees—the appointments He has made, and the rules He requires to be observed; and reveal to men things hidden from the powers of their natural understandings; as the nature or essence of the Divinity—the attributes—the works and operations of God—the resurrection and revivification of the dead—the punishment of the sepulchre, and the interrogation, and the examination, and the scale and balance, and the bridge or road that must be trodden by all on the last day, and the fish-pond, and paradise with its delights, and hell with its punishments. But the prophets are free from errors and great sins, and all believe in the same creed, which is Islamism, and the Mohammedan faith, although they were different institutions. They are also elected from created beings—honoured by personal communication with God, and by descent of angels to them; supported by manifest miracles, which are contrary to the ordinary course of nature, as that some brought back the dead to life, spoke with beasts, and trees, and other inanimate beings—and other miracles of a similar nature, to which degree of Divine eminence none but God's prophets can attain. God also has instituted a rank and order amongst them, by which one is more eminent than another. Thus, those amongst them who have fulfilled the office of ambassadors from God, are superior to those who have not been delegated; and those who have instituted a new mode of religious worship, to those who have not been commissioned to discharge that trust. The first of all was Adam, the last and most excellent was Mohammed (the blessing of God be upon him). After the order of the Prophets, the most excellent of created beings were Abu-Bekr,

Omar, Otham, and Ali. After them in the order of dignity follow the six most honoured companions of Mohammed, Talcha, Al-Zobeir, Zeid, Saad, Abd-al-Rahman, and Abu-Obedia, and after them the rest of his associates, and after them the generation of men to which Mohammed (the peace and blessing of God be on Him) was sent. May the favour of God be upon them all! Then follow those wise persons, who perform good actions. The number of the prophets, according to a certain tradition, amounts to two hundred and twenty-four thousand; but according to another tradition to one hundred and twenty-four thousand. Amongst these three hundred and thirteen have filled the office of ambassadors, and there are six who brought new constitutions; Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. May God bless and be favourable to them all! It is not required as a condition of faith, that a person should know their number, but it is necessary that he should feel an affection towards them; for whoever denies the veracity of one of the prophets, or doubts it, or doubts concerning any thing which a prophet has told, he, indeed, is an infidel.

Preserve us, O Lord, from the sin of infidelity!

Of the Last Day of Final Retribution

Faith in the last day consists in this, that we believe in our hearts, and confess with our tongues, that there will be really a last day, the day of the resurrection; and that the Almighty God will destroy this world, and whatever creatures are in it, except, however, those things which He will please to preserve; that is to say, the throne of His glory, and the base on which it rests, and the spirit, and the table, and the pen, and paradise,[1] and hell with those things which are contained in them. Then God will revive, quicken, and assemble mankind, and demand from them an account of their actions, and examine them, and show them the books, in which their good and bad actions are written. And some shall be upon His right hand, and some upon His left. Then shall He judge them in equity, and weigh their works, as well good as bad, and reward

[1] See Appendix: "Eastern Ideas of Paradise."

every soul according to the deeds done in the body. Some shall enter paradise through his goodness and mercy; but some shall be cast into hell. But of the faithful, some shall remain in flaming torments; but they shall enter paradise when they have suffered punishment according to the proportion of their sins; for the faithful shall ever abide in paradise, but the infidels in the flaming tortures of hell. Reverential fear is required to the perfection of belief in the resurrection; so that he is to be deemed an infidel who is careless about it, as likewise he who denies it, or doubts concerning it, or says "I do not fear the resurrection, nor do I desire paradise, nor do I dread hell."

Preserve us, O Lord, from the sin of infidelity.

Of the Divine Decree and Predestination

Faith in the decree of God is, that we believe in the heart and confess with the tongue, that God, the Most Highest, has decreed all things and the modes of their occurrence, so that nothing can happen in this world with respect to the conditions of operations of affairs whether for good or evil—obedience or disobedience[1]—faith or infidelity—health or illness—riches or poverty—life or death; which is not contained in the decree of God, and in His judgment, ordinance, and will. But God has thus decreed virtue, obedience, and faith, that He may so ordain and will them to be subservient to His direction, pleasure, and command. On the contrary, He has decreed vice, disobedience, and infidelity, and still ordains, wills, and decrees them; but without his salutary direction, good pleasure, or command, nay rather, by his temptation, wrath, and prohibitions. But whoever will say, that God is not delighted with virtue and faith, and is not wrath with vice and infidelity, or that God has decreed good and evil with equal complacency, is an infidel. For God wills good that He may take pleasure in it; and evil, that it may become the object of His rightful indignation.

Direct us, O God, into the right path!

[1] See Appendix, "Dispute between Adam and Moses."

End of the first part of the creed *Iman* (Faith): next follows the Second Part *Din* (Practice).

Of Lustrations, more especially that called "Ghasl," or the Greater Purification

It must be remembered, that there are seven species of water fit for rightly performing religious ablutions; that is to say, rain, sea, river, fountain, well, snow, and ice-water. But the principal requisites for the lustration Ghasl, are three: (1) intention; (2) a perfect cleansing; (3) that the water should touch the entire skin and every hair. And there are five requisites of the traditional law, or Sonna: (1) the appropriate phrase, *Bismillah*, must be pronounced; (2) the palms must be washed before the hands are put into the basin; (3) the lustration *Wodu* must be performed; (4) the skin must be rubbed with the hand; and (5) it must be prolonged. . . . (Omit the cases in which this lustration is required.)

Of the Lustration "Wodu"

The principal parts, indeed the divine institutions, of the lustration *Wodu*, are six: (1) intention; (2) the washing of the entire face; (3) the washing of the hands and fore-arms up to the elbows; (4) the rubbing of some parts of the head; (5) the washing of the feet as far as the ancles; and (6) observance of the prescribed order. And the institutions of the traditional law about this lustration are ten: (1) the preparatory formula, *Bismillah*, must be used; (2) the palms must be washed before the hands are put into the basin; (3) the mouth must be cleansed; (4) water must be drawn through the nostrils; (5) the entire head and ears must be rubbed; (6) if the beard be thick, the fingers must be drawn through it; (7) the toes must be separated; (8) the right hand and foot must be washed before the left; (9) these ceremonies must be thrice repeated; (10) the whole must be performed in uninterrupted succession. . . . (Omit the cases in which this lustration is required.)

Of Purification by Sand

The divine institutions respecting purification by sand are four: (1) intention; (2) rubbing of the face; (3) the rubbing

of the hands and fore-arms up to the elbows; and (4) the observance of this order. But the Sunnite ordinances are three: (1) the formula *Bismillah*; (2) that the right hand and foot precede the left, and, (3) that the ceremony be performed without interruption.

Of Prayer

The divine institution, on which the rites of prayer rest, are thirteen: (1) intention; (2) magnification; (3) its formula (God is great); (4) an erect posture; (5) reading the first chapter of the Koran; (6) a bending of the body; (7) raising it again; (8) prostrate adoration; (9) sitting down; (10) sitting down a second time; (11) the second confession; (12) its formula (I testify that Mohammed is the Ambassador of God), (13) the observance of this order. But the Sunnite ordinances are: (1) the first proclamation of the time of prayer called *Azan*; (2) the second proclamation; (3) the first confession (I acknowledge that there is no God but God); (4) a certain form of prayer. There are five things required before prayer: (1) the body must be free from every polluting stain; (2) it must be covered with a clean garment; (3) the worshipper must stand in a pure place; (4) the stated time must be observed; (5) the face must be turned to the Kebla, or temple of Mecca.—Prayers should be offered five times in the day: (1) at noon, when five genuflections are necessary; (2) in the afternoon, which requires five also; (3) the evening, which demands three; (4) the night, which requires four; and (5) the morning, when two genuflections are sufficient.

Of Alms

Alms should be given from five kinds of property: (1) cattle; (2) money; (3) corn; (4) fruits; and (5) merchandise. But there are three kinds of cattle from which alms must be given: (1) camels; (2) oxen; and (3) sheep. In order that alms should be given duly, six things are necessary: (1) the donor must believe in Islam; (2) he must be free; (3) he must be perfectly master of his property; (4) the value of the property must be of a certain amount; (5) it must have been a year in his possession; and (6) the animals

from which alms are due, must be those which he pastures. Alms must be paid from both gold and silver money, according to the preceding regulations. Three things are required in giving alms for corn: (1) the corn must have been planted by man, and not be of spontaneous growth; (2) it must be laid in a granary; and (3) it must amount to a certain quantity. Alms must be given from the fruit of the palm and the vine; and for the right performance of this, the four first of the six preceding precepts must be observed The requisites for giving pecuniary alms are also applicable in the case of merchandise. But the divine institution respecting the alms distributed—with respcct to the amount of wealth, and with respect to the number ot persons, at the end of Ramadhan—is twofold: (1) the intention with which the alms are bestowed; and (2) their actual distribution.

Of Abstinence

The requisites for a lawful fast are three: (1) the person must profess Islam; (2) he must have attained the age of puberty; and (3) he must be of sound mind. Five divine institutions must be observed in fasting; ten things make it null and void. (The particulars need not be enumerated.)

Of the Pilgrimage To Mecca

The divine institutions of this rite are five: (1) the intention with which a person resolves to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, and binds himself by a vow to God; (2) a residence on Mount Ararat; (3) shaving the head in the valley of Mina; (4) going round the temple to Mecca; and (5) the course between Safa and Merwa.

End of the Mohammedan Creed.

CHAPTER XV

THE FIRST FOUR CALIPHS AND THE TWELVE IMAUMS.

In any consideration of the religious creeds of the peoples of Syria we are constantly finding references to the various Caliphs and Imaums who followed Mohammed. It is as well, therefore, in this place to give a necessarily condensed account of these.

On the death of Mohammed, on June 8th A.D. 632, at the age of sixty-three years, during the last twenty-three of which he had assumed the character of a prophet, as he had not named a successor, there was an immediate hot dispute as to whom the office of leadership should be entrusted. Mohammed died in the house of his wife Ayesha, and she is said by the Schiites, or followers of Ali, to have suppressed his special designation in favour of Ali, of the Caliphate, or civil rule, and the Imaumate, or spiritual jurisdiction of Islam or Mohammedanism, on account of her hatred and jealousy of Fatimah, the wife of Ali. They say that Mohammed intended that Ali should be both Emir-il-Moomeneen, or Prince of the True Believers, and Imaum-il-Muslemeen, or High Priest of the Mussulmans; and they maintain his indefeasible right to both offices. However, the Caliphate was voted to Abu-Bekr (the "Father of the Virgin") a name he assumed on giving his daughter in marriage to Mohammed, the Ayesha mentioned above. Ali was the son of Abu Talib, an uncle of Mohammed, who brought up the Prophet in his early days, and Ali married the favourite daughter of Mohammed, Fatimah, who was not, however, a daughter of the favourite wife, Ayesha.

Abu-Bekr seems to have been a brave, mild and generous

ruler, and one whose pious character was very generally respected. Unlike the ordinary absolute rulers, such as himself, of the richest countries in the world, he is said to have left behind him but a single camel and one Ethiopian slave, and even these he bequeathed to his successor. This was Omar-Ibn-al-Khattab, like Abu-Bekr a native of Mecca, and originally a camel-herd. He developed into a most bigoted Mussulman, eager to massacre all who would not believe in Mohammed. The greater part of Syria and Mesopotamia had been subdued during the life of Abu-Bekr. Their conquest was completed under Omar; the ancient empire of the Persians was overthrown at the battle of Kadesch; Palestine, Phœnicia and Egypt submitted to the Saracen yoke almost without a struggle; and the standard of the Prophet floated in triumph from the sands of the Cyrenian desert to the banks of the Indus. "During the reign of Omar," says Khondemir, "the Saracens conquered thirty-six thousand cities, towns, and castles, destroyed four thousand Christian, Magian and pagan temples, and erected fourteen hundred mosques." Omar was assassinated in the eleventh year of his reign, and buried in the same tomb with Abu-Bekr and Mohammed.

Omar had directed, that at his death, a council of six should be assembled, and three days allowed them for deliberation, at the end of which time, if they had not agreed upon a new Caliph, they should all be slain! The six who met to deliberate under these conditions were Ali, who as we have seen was a cousin and son-in-law of Mohammed; Othman, also a son-in-law; Zobeir a cousin of the Prophet, and Abd-al-Rahman, Talha, and Saad, his favourite companions. After some deliberation they elected Othman, and he was installed third Caliph.

Othman, who had married successively two daughters of Mohammed, had long acted as the Prophet's secretary, and enjoyed his intimate confidence. At the time of his election as Caliph he was more than eighty years of age, but his health was unshaken, and his faculties unabated. He pursued the warlike policy of his predecessors; by his orders the Mussulman armies completed the conquest of Persia, and extended the sway of the Saracens to the river

Oxus, and the borders of India. Northern Africa, as far as the shores of the Atlantic, was subdued by another of Othman's armies, and a fleet, equipped in the harbours of Egypt and Syria, subdued the island of Cyprus, and menaced the northern coasts of the Mediterranean. But factions broke out on many sides, and a mutiny broke out in the Egyptian army. Discontented troops marched suddenly upon Medina, and Othman was slain in a mosque while engaged in his daily perusal of the Koran.

On the death of Othman, Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib became Caliph, and the Schiites, as a body, make it a religious duty to solemnly curse, in their rituals, as will be seen later, all those who had thus stood in his way—Abu-Bekr, Omar and Othman.

But the opposition to Ali did not end with his accession to the Caliphate. Talha and Zobeir, instigated by Ayesha, his determined enemy, took the field against him. They were defeated, and Talha and Zobeir were put to death, and Ayesha imprisoned. But Moawiyah, a son of Abu Sofian, who, at the head of the Koreish, had long resisted Mohammed, and who had been appointed by Omar to the governorship of Syria, proved a more formidable antagonist. He continued his rebellion until Ali was assassinated, A.D. 661, when having forced Hassan, the eldest son of Ali, to resign, he became Caliph, to the exclusion of the family of Mohammed.

Moawiyah was founder of the dynasty of the Omeyades (so called from Omeyah, one of his ancestors) which ruled the Mohammedan world till the accession of the Abassides, Caliphs of Baghdad, who were descended from Abbas, an uncle of Mohammed, who obtained the Caliphate in A.D. 750. This dynasty proved as zealous enemies of the descendants of Ali as the former. After a fierce conflict between Ali and Moawiyah, the former, after several attempts had been made on his life, was assassinated, also in a mosque, his death taking place towards the close of the thirty years which Mohammed had predicted would be a fatal period for the Caliphate.

From the contest between Ali and Moawiyah arose the distinction of the Mohammedans into Sunnites and

Schiites. The chief points at issue between them are the following: (1) The Schiites, or as they call themselves, the Adalyihans, or "lovers of justice," assert that the three first Caliphs were usurpers; the Sunnites declare that they were legitimate monarchs, elected according to the "Sunna," or traditional law of the Prophet. (2) The Schiites regard Ali as the equal of Mohammed: some even assert his superiority, but the Sunnites deny that he possessed any special dignity. (3) The Schiites assert that the Koran is made void by the authority attributed to tradition; the Sunnites say that tradition is necessary to complete and explain the doctrines of the Koran. The Turks, Egyptians and Arabs belong to the Sunnite sect, while the tenets of the Schiites are professed by the Persians, the Nusairis and Druses, a great portion of the Tartars, and by certain of the Mohammedan peoples of India.

Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib was buried at Cufa, but the exact place of his sepulchre has not been determined.

Ali is reckoned to be the first Imaum, and his partisans declare that, though human force prevented him from enjoying temporal power, his spiritual dignity was the gift of God, and could not, therefore, be affected by the successive usurpations of Abu-Bekr, Omar, and Othman. The Schiite notion of an Imaum is precisely the same as that which the Thibetians form of their Grand Llama, (a point gone into very fully by Madame Blavatsky, to which a separate chapter is devoted later on in this work), and the Burmese of their *Bodhisatwas*, that is, the union in the same person of a divine and a human nature. Many Schiites think that Ali is not dead, but that he will return again to reign upon earth, when men, by their docility and submission, will cause him to forget the calamities which he had to suffer in his former career. A great number of them declare that the first Imaum was superior to the Prophet himself; some say that Ali was chosen by God to propagate Islamism, but that the angel Gabriel, by mistake, delivered the letter to Mohammed. Others say that Mohammed was ordered to deliver his revelations in Ali's name but that, seduced by pride and ambition, he falsely proclaimed himself the chosen Apostle of God.

Ali left three sons by his wife Fatimah : Hassan, Hossein, and Mohsin, the latter dying young. After the death of Fatimah he married eight wives, by whom he had fifteen sons in all, one of whom, Mohammed Hanefeyed, attained some note.

On the death of Ali, Hassan was proclaimed Caliph and Imaum in Irak : the former title he was forced to resign to Moawiyah ; the latter, or spiritual dignity, his followers regarded as inalienable. After nine years had passed, Hassan met the usual fate of Oriental rulers, being poisoned by his wife Jaadah, at the instigation of Moawiyah. Hossein succeeded to the title of Imaum, and enjoyed it until A.D. 679, when he was slain in battle with Yezid, son of Moawiyah, who continued the conflict between the rival factions. The anniversary of Hossein's death, or martyrdom as it is considered by the Schiites, is celebrated with extraordinary splendour in the month Mohurrum, especially in Persia and India, the solemnities lasting ten days, during which the Schiites abstain from everything that could suggest notions of joys or pleasure. The Nusairis always speak of Hossein as the martyr of Kerbela, the place where he met his death.

Ali, the son of Hossein, who was twelve years old at the death of his father, became the fourth Imaum. He refused to take any part in public affairs, and died A.D. 712, leaving such a reputation for piety that he is called *Zeyu-il-Aabideen*, the " ornament of pious men."

He was succeeded by his eldest son, Mohammed, who led as tranquil and retired a life of piety as his father. He devoted himself to study, and was supposed to have paid particular attention to the practice of magic. For these reasons the Schiites call him the " possessor of the secret," or Il Bakir, " the investigator." The Omeyade Caliph of his day, alarmed at the progress of opinions which tended to strengthen the house of Ali, caused him to be poisoned, A.D. 734. Some of the Schiites believe that he wanders secretly over the earth still, accompanied by Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib and the celebrated prophet Kedher.

Djaafar, the sixth Imaum, was called *As-Sadik* or " the just," and in his reign an attempt was made, though

unsuccessful, to restore the temporal power of the house of Ali, by Zeid, brother of the late Imaum. Djaafar died in A.D. 765, just as the Caliphate passed, as already mentioned, to the Abassides.

Djaafar designated his son Ismael as his successor, but as he died young, in 762, he declared his second son, Mousa, as his heir in the Imaumship. Now, as Ismael had left children, those of the Schiites who regarded the Imaumate as hereditary, denied that Diaafar had any right to make a second nomination. They therefore formed the sect called the Ismaelis, from which sprang the Fatimite caliphs of Egypt, and the Ismaelis, or Assassins of Persia and Syria, as already mentioned. The Druses are the followers of one of these Fatimite caliphs, Hakem, as we shall show later.

The Nusairis, who acknowledge the belief in the twelve Imaums, recognize the claims of Mousa, whom they call Ill-Kazim, or "the patient." In this they are distinguished from the Druses and Ismaelis, who break the line at Ismael, to the exclusion of Mousa and his descendants, and perhaps from the Karmatians, who appear to have done the same.

Mousa's son, Ali, called by the Nusairis *Ir-Reda*, or "the acceptation," was the eighth Imaum. Mousa was assassinated by order of Haroun-ar-Rashid, the hero of the *Arabian Nights*, and Ali was proclaimed by Il Mamoun, successor of Haroun, as his own successor in the empire. But this raised such a sedition among the thirty thousand descendants of *Abbas* that Il Mamoun was obliged to cause Ali to be privately poisoned in A.D. 816.

Mohammed, son of Ali, was the ninth Imaum; he lived in privacy at Baghdad, where he died at an early age, in A.D. 835. On account of his generosity he is styled by the Nusairis *Il Djawwad*, "the generous."

Ali, the tenth Imaum, was but a child when he succeeded his father. He was kept closely confined all his life in the city of Asker, by the Caliph Motawakkel, the mortal enemy of the Schiites, by whom he was poisoned in A.D. 868. From the place of his residence he is called "the Askerite." He is also known by the Nusairis as *Ali-il-Hadi*, "the director."

Hassan, his son and successor, is also called Il Askeri,

from the place where, like his father, he lived, and was finally poisoned.

Mohammed, the twelfth and last Imaum, was but six months old when his father died. He was kept closely confined by the Caliph, but after he had attained the age of twelve years he suddenly disappeared. The Sunnites say that he was drowned in the Tigris, A.D. 879, and show what they say is his tomb. The Nusairis deny the fact of his death, and say that he wanders unknown over the earth until the predestined moment arrives, when he shall claim and receive universal empire.

All the Schiite sects say that the earth will not have a legitimate sovereign until the re-appearance of the last Imaum. The Persian kings of the Sufee dynasty styled themselves "slaves of the lord of the country," that is, of the invisible Imaum; they always kept two horses saddled and bridled in the royal stables at Ispahan, one for the twelfth Imaum, whenever he should appear, the other for Jesus Christ, by whom they believed he would be accompanied.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF THE NUSAIRIS

THE Nusairis believe in one GOD, self-existent and eternal, who manifested himself seven times in the world in human form, from Abel to Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, which last manifestation, they say, was the most perfect; to this the others pointed, and in this the mystery of the divine appearances found their chief end and completion.[1]

At each of these manifestations the Deity made use of two other Persons: the first created out of the light of His essence, and by Himself; the second created by the first. These, with the Deity, form an inseparable Trinity, called *Maana-Ism-Bab*.

The first, the *Maana*, "meaning," is the designation of the Deity as the meaning, sense, or reality of all things.

The second, the *Ism* "name," is also called the *Hedjah*, or veil, because under it the *Maana* conceals its glory, while by it, it reveals itself to men.

The third, the *Bab*, "door," is so called because through it is the entrance to the knowledge of the two former.

In the time of Adam, when Abel was the *Maana*, Adam was the *Ism*, and Gabriel the *Bab*. In the time of Mohammed, when Ali was the *Maana*, Mohammed the Prophet was the *Ism*, and Salman-il-Farisee, or the Persian, a companion of Mohammed, was the *Bab*.

The following are the seven appearances of the *Maana*, the *Ism*, and the *Bab*:—

[1] This account of the religion of the Nusairis is condensed from Lyde's *Asian Mystery*, pp. 110 ff.

MAANA (*meaning*)	ISM (*name*)	BAB (*door*)
1. Abel.	Adam.	Gabriel.
2. Seth.	Noah.	Yayeel-Ibn-Fatin.
3. Joseph.	Jacob.	Ham-Ibn-Koosh.
4. Joshua.	Moses.	Dan-Ibn-Usbaoot.
5. Asaph.	Solomon.	Abdullah-Ibn-Simaan.
6. Simon-is-Saf. (Cephas)	Jesus.	Rozabah-Ibn-il-Merzaban.
7. Ali.	Mohammed.	Salman-il-Farisee.

After Ali, the Deity manifested Himself in the Imaums, His posterity, Ali himself being the first Imaum, or Imaum of Imaums as he is styled. To Him all divine attributes are ascribed, and to Him all prayers are made.

The secret of the Trinity described above is represented by a sign, token, or mark to the true believers, namely, the three letters *Ain*, *Mim*, *Sin*, the three initial letters of Ali, Mohammed, and Salman.

Among the many worlds known to GOD are two, the Great Luminous World, which is the Heaven, " the Light of Light," and the little earthly world, the residence of men. A Nusairi has to believe in the existence in the Luminous, Spiritual World of seven hierarchies, each with seven degrees, which have their representatives in the earthly world. They are: (1) *Abwah*, or doors, 400 in number; (2) *Aytam*, orphans or disciples, 500 in number; (3) *Nukaba*, princes or chiefs, (the companions of Moses, and properly so called) 600; (4) *Nudjaba*, or excellent, 700; (5) *Mokhtassen*, or peculiars, 800; (6) *Mukhliseen*, or pure in faith, 900; (7) *Mumtaheenen*, or tried, who are 1,100 in number, the total being thus 5,000.

In this world they have their representatives in twelve *Nukaba*, and also twenty-eight *Nudjaba*, who, besides their earthly names, have names in the world of light, namely, those of the twenty-eight mansions, or stations of the moon. They have also their counterparts in apostles and prophets, who are moreover representatives of the Deity, as being inhabited by a partial emanation from Him.

This earthly world in like manner contains seven degrees of believers; (1) *Mukarrabeen*, near ones, 14,000 in number;

(2) *Cherubims*, 15,000; (3) *Rooheyeen*, spiritual, 16,000; (4) *Mukaddaseen*, sanctified, 17,000; (5) *Saiyeen*, ascetics, 18,000; (6) *Mustameen* listeners, 19,000; (7) *Lahiheen*, followers, 20,000. In all, 119,000.

The mystery of the faith of the Unitarians, the mystery of mysteries, and chief article of the faith of the true believers, is the veiling of the Deity in light, that is, in the eye of the Sun, and his manifestation in his servant *Abd-in-Noor*. Light is described as the eternal *Maana*, or meaning, which is concealed in light; the Deity thus concealed in light manifests himself in *Abd-in-Noor*, the "servant of light," which is wine; this wine being consecrated and drunk by the true believers, the initiated, in the *Kuddas*, or Sacrament, the great mystery of the Nusairis.

The Nusairis believe that all souls were created from the essence which inhabits all beings, and that, after a certain number of transmigrations, those of true believers become stars in the great world of light.

When a Nusairi attains the age of manhood he is initiated into the mysteries of his religion, and becomes a participator in its rites, and acquainted with its secret prayers, signs, and watch-words, by all of which the initiated are bound up into a Freemasonic body of *Ukhwan*, or brethren. The ritual of this initiation ceremony is given in a later chapter.

A proof of the influence of Zoroaster and the Magians on the religion of the Nusairis may be traced in the attribution of light as the symbol of the Deity.

Ali is usually alluded to and addressed as our Lord, *Ameer-il-Moomeneen*, Prince of the True Believers, but another favourite term of address is *Ameer-in-Nahal*, Prince of Bees, that is the angels, or true believers, who are styled bees because they choose out the best flowers, that is, follow the best instruction.

Next to the seven great manifestations of the Deity, and twelve lesser manifestations in the Imaums, a conspicuous part of the Nusairi religious system is the *Aytam*, or orphans, signifying the disciples who have lost their master. These are the second of the seven spiritual hierarchies of which the Doors are the first and they are generally connected with the Door, though the series sometimes

commences with the names of Ali, thus: "His Name, His Door, His Aytam, and the people of His Holy Hierarchies. As a Nusairi is required to believe in the chain of divine appearances from Abel to Ali, and in the chain of Imaums, from the first Hassan to the last, so he is required to believe that there have always existed five *Aytam*, five being the consecrated number in this case. The five orphans in the time of Adam, when Gabriel was the Door, were the five angels, Michael, Israfeel, Azrael, Malik and Rudwan, and these are the types of the successive appearances of the *Aytam*. Thus it is said: "There are no angels but the five angels, the orphans."

The Nusairis believe that there were five worlds, that is ages, before that of man, and that during them the world was successively inhabited by five kinds of beings, worshippers of Ali, called the *Djann*, the *Bann*, the *Tumm*, the *Ramm*, and the *Djahn*.

The Nusairis, as mentioned before, have, from the very first, been believers in the transmigration of souls, in common with others of the secret sects of the East. Hamza, the apostle of the Druses, directs his anathemas against them, because they carry the doctrine to such an extent as to say "that the souls of the enemies of Ali will pass into dogs, and other unclean brutes, till they enter fire, to be burnt, and beaten under the hammer." After refuting this doctrine of transmigration into animals, he concludes, "and whoever believes in metempsychosis, like the Ansaireeh, the followers of the Maana, in the person of Ali son of Abu-Talib, and who stands up for it, suffers the loss both of this world and the next." Metempsychosis, which is called by Mussulman authorities *Tanasukh*, is called by the Nusairis *Taknees*, or *Tadjaiyul*, that is the coming in successive "djeels," or generations. The Jesuit missionaries say on this point: "The Ansaireeh further admit the metempsychosis, and say that the same soul passes from one body into another, as many as seventy times; but with this difference, that the soul of a good man enters into a body more perfect than his own, and the soul of a vicious man passes into the body of an unclean animal."

A Nusairi believes that after he has become purified,

in passing through different incarnations, he becomes a star in heaven, the first centre of humanity. For this reason they pray that Ali will clothe the brethren in envelopes of light.

The religious literature of the Nusairis includes a Manual of Instructions, and a Catechism, both of which are largely quoted by Lyde and Taylor, quoting, in their turn, from Von Hammer and Catafago. Lyde had obtained possession of a MS. copy of this Manual, which apparently corresponds to the Manual referred to by Sulaiman, from which copious extracts, with regard to the Initiation ceremonies, will be found in the next chapter. The Nusairis also acknowledge the *Tawrah*, the Old Testament or Law; the *Andjeel* or Gospel; the *Zuboor*, or Psalms; and the Koran. But they speak in all of 114 books, among which they include those attributed to Seth, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, in the Syriac.[1] Various MSS. that have fallen into the hands of Europeans show that there are books among the Nusairis, and that these moreover agree in all main points.

The Catechism, which in many points is identical with the Manual, was sent with a French version, by M. Catafago, Dragoman of the Prussian Consul-General at Beyrout, to the King of Prussia, and a translation of the Catechism, by Dr. Wolff, was issued in the Journal of the German Oriental Society for 1845-6, from which Lyde has translated the more important portions.[2] The original MS. is in thirty-eight leaves, large octavo, and is called "The Book of Instruction in the Ansaireeh Religion."

The introduction contains an invocation of the Eternal God, and a thanksgiving "for the communication of His divine secret, and the truth of the holy religion," which consists in the perception of His great Name, and of His holy Door, through the person of the *Abd-in-Noor*, which he has assumed for the sake of His saints, who know Him; also a thanksgiving for all the benefits received from God. Then follow two portions of the Catechism: one theoretical,

[1] Some extracts from *The Book of Enoch* and *The Apocalypse of Abraham* are given in the Appendix, from the very excellent edition of these Apocryphal books prepared for the S.P.C.K. by Canons Box and Charles.

[2] *Asian Mystery*, pp. 271 ff.

which speaks of instruction, and the other practical, which speaks of customs and ceremonies. The theoretical part declares, in the form of question and answer, a belief in the divinity of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, through his own testimony, and from a discourse by Mohammed himself, which ends thus: He (Ali) is my Lord and yours." Ali is declared to have concealed himself in Mohammed in the period of his change of shapes, that is in the seventh manifestation previously referred to, when he took Mohammed as his "Veil." Then follow declarations as to the *Maana*, the *Ism*, and the *Bab*, and the sixty-three names of the *Ism*, which spiritually taken, denote the *Maana*, and personally the *Ism*—those of which the Godhead has made use to manifest Himself in the persons of the prophets and apostles, the first three being Adam, Enoch, and Kanaan. The Bab is also said to be the perfect soul, the Holy Ghost, the angel Gabriel, etc. It is also stated that while the name of Ali is given to the Deity by the Arabs, He himself has taken the name of Aristotle, and in the Christian Gospel is called Elias, while the Indians know Him as Kankara. Then are recited the names of the seven hierarchies, and their degrees, as given above. Then come some questions and answers referring to doctrines of the Eucharistic celebrations and Masses, which I give in full, as they have not been previously alluded to.

LXXV.—Is it true that the Messiah was crucified, as the Christians assert?—*Ans.* No; the Jews were deceived by a resemblance. (Koran iii. 163.)

LXXVI.—What is the Mass?—*Ans.* The consecration of the wine, which is drunk to the health of the *Nakeeb* or *Nadjeeb*.

LXXVII.—What is the Offering (Korban [1])?—*Ans.* The consecration of the bread, which the true believers take in their hand for the souls of their brethren, and on that account the Mass is read.

LXXVIII.—Who reads the Mass, and brings the offering?—*Ans.* Your great Imaums and preachers.

LXXIX.—What is the great secret (mystery) of God?—

[1] Cf. Mark vii. 11.

Ans. The flesh and the blood, of which Jesus has said: "This is my flesh and my blood; eat and drink thereof, for it is eternal life."

LXXX.—Where do the souls of your brethren, the true believers, go when they leave their graves?—*Ans.* Into the great world of light.

LXXXI.—What will happen to the godless and polytheists?—*Ans.* They will have all torments to suffer in all ages.

LXXXII.—What is the mystery of the faith of the Unitarians? What is the mystery of mysteries and chief article of faith of the true believers?—*Ans.* It is the veiling of our Lord in light, that is, in the eye of the sun, and his manifestation in his servant, Abd-in-Noor.

LXXXIII.—What will happen to those who doubt this mystery, after they have once acknowledged it?—*Ans.* They will be reprobated.

LXXXIV.—What are the stipulations which the believer must enter on, if he will receive the secret of secrets?—*Ans.* He must, before all things, assist his brethren with all his means; he must give them the fifth part of his goods; he must pray at the appointed hours; fulfil his obligations; give to all their dues; obey his Lord, invoke Him, thank Him, often pronounce His name, in all points submit himself to His will, and keep himself from everything that may displease Him.

LXXXV.—What must the believer keep himself from?—*Ans.* From affronting or injuring his brethren.

LXXXVI.—Is the believer allowed to make known to anyone the secret of secrets?—*Ans.* Only to those of his religion, else he will lose the favour of God.

LXXXVII.—What is the first mass?—*Ans.* It is that which is spoken of before the prayer of *Nurooz.*

LXXXVIII.—What is the prayer of Nurooz?—*Ans.* The words of consecration of the wine in the chalice.[1]

LXXXIX.—Say that prayer. *Ans.* Among other things it is said: "Drink of this pure wine, for one day its lights will be covered with thick clouds."

XC.—What is the consecrated wine called which the believers drink?—*Ans.* *Abd-in-Noor.*

[1] See Appendix, "The Feast of Nurooz."

XCI.—Wherefore so?—*Ans.* Because God has manifested Himself in the same.

XCII.—What is the concealed secret of God, which stands between the K and N?—*Ans.* Light, according to His word: "Let there be light, and there was light." [1]

XCIII.—What is light?—*Ans.* The eternal *Maana*, which is concealed in light.

XCIV.—If our Lord is concealed in light where does he manifest himself?—*Ans.* In the wine, as it is said in the Nurooz.

XCV.—Why does the believer direct his face, when he prays, towards the sun?—*Ans.* Know that the sun is the light of lights.

XCVI.—Why do we say that our Lord makes turnings (transmigrations) and revolutions?—*Ans.* He does so, and manifests Himself periodically in all revolutions and periods, from Adam to the son of Abu-Talib. (It will be realized this is no answer at all.)

XCVII.—What do the outer and inner word denote?—*Ans.* The inner, the Godhead of our Lord; the outer, his manhood. Outwardly we say that He is spoken of as "Our Lord Ali, son of Abu-Talib": and this denotes inwardly the *Maana*, the *Ism*, and the *Bab*; one gracious and compassionate God.

The practical portion of the Catechism gives a general formula for prayer, a formula for mass, and the ritual of reception into the sect.

Some very interesting and important details with regard to the religious rites, doctrines, and history of the Nusairis are given in a work published at Beirut in 1863, the author being a former member of the sect. *The Book of Sulaiman's First Ripe Fruit*, in which are disclosed many of the mysteries of the Nusairian religion, was written by Sulaiman Effendi, of Adhanah, and edited for him by Dr. Van Dyck, a missionary at Beirut. An exhaustive review, with copious extracts from the original Arabic, was prepared for the American

[1] The letters K and N represent the word "be" in Arabic, and since this word was used in the creation of light, light is called the secret of God, which is concealed between the K and the N.

Oriental Society by Mr. Edward E. Salisbury, who had previously contributed some interesting papers on the Syrian sects, and was published in the Society's Journal for 1864. "This tract was written," says Dr. Van Dyck, "by a Nusairi, who first doubted his own religion and became a Jew, then a Moslem, then a Greek, then a Protestant. He was taken as a conscript, and sent from Adhanah to Damascus, where he was released. He came to Beirut, and wrote this tract. He then went to Ladikia, and remained some months with Rev. J. R. Dodds, Missionary of the Associated Reformed Church: and then returned to have his tract printed at his own expense." In this, and the following chapter, are given the most interesting portions of Mr. Salisbury's review.

The work is divided into sections, of which the first describes the author's initiation as a Nusairi, and embraces what purports to be a complete Nusairian prayer-book, with important explanations, and historical notes: the second section is chiefly an enumeration of some of the principal festivals of the sect: the third gives a detailed report of the ceremonies observed, and the liturgical forms used on those occasions, and includes some statistics of the sect: the fourth treats of the important Nusairian doctrines of a fall from virtue and happiness in a pre-existent state: the fifth consists entirely of specimens of Nusairian poetry: the sixth is a statement, by the author, of certain fundamental principles of the sect: the seventh is a narrative of the circumstances under which the author discovered its deeper mysteries, of his own conversion, first to Judaism and then to Christianity, and of the treatment which he met with in consequence from his co-religionists: and the eighth, and last, is wholly controversial, being an argument against the doctrines and rites of the Nusairis.

The author begins by informing us that he was born in Antioch in A.H. 1250, or A.D. 1834-5, and lived there to the age of seven years, when he was taken to Adhanah; and that his initiation took place when he was eighteen years old, the appointed time being from the age of eighteen to twenty.

The initiation ceremonies are thus described. On a

certain day there was a general gathering of high and low of the Nusairis of Adhanah, belonging to that division of the sect known as Northerners,[1] before whom he was summoned, when he was presented with a glass of wine. One whom he describes as the Pursuivant, or Director of Ceremonies, took a place at his side, and said to him: "Say thou: By the mystery of thy beneficence, O my Uncle and lord, thou crown of my head, I am thy pupil, and let thy sandal be upon my head." When he had drunk the wine, the Imaum turned towards him, and asked: "Wouldst thou take up the sandals of those here present, to do honour to thy Lord?" to which he replied, "Nay, but only the sandal of my lord;" whereupon the company laughed at his want of docility. Then the Minister (Deacon), being so directed by the assembly, brought to them the sandal of the Pursuivant: and when they had uncovered the Candidate's head, they laid it thereon, and put over it a white rag: after which the Pursuivant began to pray over him that he might receive the mystery. When this prayer was ended, the sandal was taken from his head, he was enjoined secrecy, and all dispersed. This is what is called the Betokening Adoption.

After forty days, another assembly was convened, another cup of wine was drunk by the Candidate, and he was directed to say: "In the faith of the mystery of Ain-Mim-Sin," which Sulaiman thus explains: Ain stands for Ali, or the Archetypal Deity: Mim for Mohammed, or the Expressed Deity, or the Intermediary: Sin for Salman-al-Farsi, or the Communicator. The Candidate was charged by the Imaum to pronounce the cabalistic word composed of these three letters, namely AMS, five hundred times a day. As before, secrecy was enjoined, and the so-called King's Adoption was now accomplished.

Another interval of probation, lasting seven months (often extended to nine) having passed away, the Candidate was called before another assembly, in whose presence he stood at a respectful distance. Then a Deputy rose in the assembly, having the Pursuivant on his right, and another official on his left, each with a cup of wine in his

[1] One of the four divisions of the Nusairis, see p. 154.

hand; all, turning to the Imaum, chanted the third Melody. After this, the whole assembly, facing the Second Preceptor on the Deputy's left, known as the Dignitary, chanted to him the following: "I inquire after the traits of nobleness where dwell they? To thee have certain men pointed me. By the reality of Mohammed and his race, compassionate one who comes to kiss thy hands. Thou art my goal, let not my thought of thee prove vain: account us to-day as depending upon thee."

After this, they placed their hands on the Preceptor's and sat down. Then the Preceptor stood up, took the Deputy's cup from his hand, bowed his head in worship, and read the Chapter of "Bowing of the Head" (see p. 159). Having recited this litany, he raised his head, and read the Chapter of the "Ain" (see p. 161). After this, he stood with his face towards the Imaum, and said: "Hail, hail, hail, O my lord Imaum!" To this the Imaum replied, "May it be well with thee, and those around thee! Thou hast done that which these here assembled have not done; for thou hast taken in thy hand the cup, hast drunk, hast bowed the head, and saluted; and to God is humble worship due. But what is thy desire, and what wouldst thou?"

To this the Dignitary answered: "I would have an evening of the countenance of my Master": then retiring, he looked towards the heavens, and came back to the assembly, and said: "Hail, hail, hail, O my lord," to which the Imaum replied as before: "What is thy desire, and what wouldst thou? The Dignitary said: "I have a desire, and would it might be sanctioned." The Imaum replied: "Go to, I sanction it." The Dignitary then stepped aside from the assembly, and approached the Candidate, to give him an opportunity to kiss his hands and feet: which being done, he returned, and said: "Hail, hail, hail, O my lord Imaum." Then the Imaum said to him again: "What is thy wish, and what wouldst thou?" To this he answered: "A person has presented himself to me in the way." Again the Imaum spoke: "Hast thou not heard what was said by our elect lord: 'As for the nightmare duty, no man of might can take it patiently?'" The Dignitary replied: "I have a stout heart, no fear for

me "—then after regarding the Candidate, he turned towards the assembly, and said : " This person, named so-and-so, has come to be initiated in your presence." The Imaum then inquired : " Who directed him to us ?" To this the Dignitary replied " The Eternal Archetypal Deity, the august Expressed Deity, and the honoured Communicator, signified by the word AMS." The Imaum said : " Bring him, that we may see him " ; whereupon the Preceptor took him by the right hand, and led him towards the Imaum.

On his approach, the Imaum stretched out his feet, which the Candidate kissed, and also his hands, and said to him : " What is thy desire, and what wouldst thou, O young man ? " Thereupon the Pursuivant arose, and stationing himself at the Candidate's side, instructed him to say : " I ask for the mystery of your faith, O multitudes of believers." Then, eyeing him with a stern look, the Imaum said : " What impels thee to seek from us this mystery, crowned with pearls large and small, which only a familiar angel, or a commissioned prophet, can support ? Know, O my child, that there are many angels, but that only the Familiars can support this mystery ; and that the prophets are numerous, but that only the Commissioned can support this mystery : and that there are many believers, but that only the Approved can support this mystery. Wilt thou suffer the cutting off of thy head, hands and feet, and not disclose this august mystery ? " To this the Candidate replied : " Yes." Thereupon the Imaum said : " I wish thee to furnish a hundred sponsors," at which those present interposed : " The rule, O our lord Imaum "—and he said, " In deference to you, let there be twelve sponsors." Then the Second Preceptor stood up, and kissed the hands of the twelve sponsors, and the Candidate kissed their hands. Then the sponsors rose, and said : " Hail, hail, hail, O my lord Imaum," and the Imaum said, " What is your desire, ye nobles ? " To this they replied : " We have come to be sponsors for this Candidate." Then the Imaum inquired : " In case he discloses this mystery, will ye bring him to me, that we may cut him in pieces and drink his blood ? " They answered : " Yes," and he added : " I am not satisfied with your sponsorship alone—nay, but I would have two

persons of consideration to be responsible for you." So one of the sponsors ran, with the Candidate after him, and kissed the hands of the two required sponsors, whose hands the Candidate also kissed.

After this the two selected sponsors stood up, with their hands on their breasts; and the Imaum turned towards them, and said: "God give you a good evening, O sponsors, respected and pure, men of mark, and no sucklings! But what would ye?" They replied: "We have come to be sponsors for the twelve sponsors, and also for this person." The Imaum replied: "In case, then, he runs off before having fully learned our forms of prayer, or discloses this mystery, will ye two bring him to me, that we may take his life?" They replied: "Yes," and the Imaum spoke again: "Sponsors are perishable, and sponsors for sponsors abide not—I would have from him something that will last." They then gave way, and the Imaum said to the Candidate: "Come near to me, O young man;" so he approached him, and at the same time the Imaum adjured him, by all the heavenly bodies, that he would not disclose this mystery: and afterwards gave into his right hand the Book of the Summary, while the Pursuivant, stationed at his side, instructed him to say: "Be thou extolled! Swear me, O my lord Imaum, to this august mystery, and thou shalt be clear of any failure in me."

Taking the book from him, the Imaum said: "O, my child, I swear thee, not in respect to money, or suretyship—nay, but in respect only to the mystery of God, as our chiefs and lords have sworn us." This action and these words he repeated three times; after which the Candidate placed his hand upon the Summary three times, making oath thereby to the Imaum, that he would not disclose this mystery so long as he should live.

After this the Imaum said: "Know, O my child, that the earth will not suffer thee to be buried in it, shouldst thou disclose this mystery; and thy return will not be to enter into human vestments—nay, but, when thou diest, thou wilt enter into vestments of degrading transformation, from which there will be no deliverance for thee, for ever." Then they seated the Candidate among them, and uncovering

his head, put a veil over it ; the sponsors placed their hands upon his head, and began to pray : first, they read the Chapters of Victory, Bowing the Head, and the Ain : then, after drinking some wine, they read also the Chapter of Salutation, and raised their hands from off his head. Next the Introducing Dignitary took hold of him, and made him salute the First Preceptor and then, taking a cup of wine in his hand, gave him drink, and instructed him to say : " In God's name, by the help of God, and in the faith of the mystery of Lord Abu Abdallah, possessor of divine knowledge, in the faith of the mystery of his blessed memorial, in the faith of his mystery-God give him happiness." After this the assembly then dispersed.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF THE NUSAIRIS: CONTINUED

THE Dignitary then took the young votary to his own house, where he taught him the "Formula of Disburdening" (see p. 171), and also made him acquainted with the various forms of prayer, to the number of sixteen, in which the Nusairis pay divine honours to Ali. Each of these forms of prayer is called a chapter, with a particular name, indicative of its contents; and in several cases the so-called prayer has little or none of the tone of supplication, being for the most part, or wholly, a recital, and that without any special propriety, apparently, in reference to devotion. The whole collection, to which the general title of *Dustur*, i.e. "The Canon," is given, provides a good insight into the Nusairi beliefs.

The first chapter, called "The Commencement," is thus explained by Sulaiman. He observes that, according to Nusairian doctrines, GOD is visible, and yet not wholly definable, whence the expression, which occurs in this chapter, "O manifest, O limit of all aims, Thou who art hidden, yet unclothed, whose lights arise out of Thee and set in Thee, from Thee come forth, and to Thee return." He also here alludes to a separation of the Nusairis into four divisions: 1, those who pay homage to the Heavens, whom he calls Northerners; 2, adorers of the Moon, whom he calls elsewhere Kalazians:[1] 3, worshippers of the twilight: and 4, worshippers of the air. By the first of these parties the passage just quoted is understood to point to the heavens,

[1] Probably so named after Sheikh Mohammed Bin Kalazu, who is quoted later.

" out of which," said they, " the stars arise, and in which they set ; and which are visible, yet undefinable, as to their prime configuration, except by the Expressed Deity." But the second party, in support of their adoration of the moon, allege that other expression of this chapter : " Thy brilliant appearance," saying " that the moon is manifest to sight, while as for the dark part of it, that represents the being of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, which is veiled from our eyes, which we now see as a dark object, though, when we are purified from these bodily vestments, and exalted among the stars, through our faith, we shall behold it in sapphire splendour." The worshippers of the twilight argue, in their own favour, from the expression " whose lights arise out of thee," etc., saying that all the lights of heaven make their appearance from out of the East, and revolve and set in the West ; and they may be seen to pray with their faces turned towards the sun as it is rising or setting, in the belief that the twilight-reddening of the sky creates the sun, according to the words of Sheikh Ali the Magian, in the so-called " Legacy " left to them by him : " By the full moon, whose lights from her sun come forth ; and by her sun, production of the morning beam." The worshippers of the air have also their own argument from this chapter, appealing to the expression : " O Thou who art He," which by a slight change of reading, they make to mean " O Thou who art the air."

The second chapter, called " The Canonization of Ibn-al-Wali," is a prayer for deliverance from seven kinds of degrading transformation, together with their subdivisions, embracing all kinds of cattle and wild beasts, and other forms of living creatures ; and it is believed that these seven degrees of transformation are the seven floors of Hell mentioned in the Koran :[1] " And it has seven entrances, with a part divided off to each." Thus the sinner, in this petition, with humble heart, and spirit submissive to his lord Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, intercedes for salvation therefrom.

The third chapter is called " The Canonization of Abu Said," and is a prayer to the Prince of Bees, Ali the Bounteous, imploring the aid of the Elect Five, the Revealing Six,

[1] Koran xv. 44.

the Seven Twinkling Stars, the Eight Strong Bearers of the Throne, the Nine gifted with Mohammed-quality, the Ten Chanticleers of Holiness, the Eleven Ascension-points of Communicator-quality, and the Twelve Strings of Imaumship.

The " Elect Five " are the times of prayer prescribed to the Nusairis. These are that of Mohammed, at mid-day; of Fatimah, in the afternoon; of Hassan, son of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, at sunset; of Hussain, brother of Hassan, in the evening; and of Muhsin, Mystery of Obscurity, at day-break. Whoever is not conversant with the names of these five persons, and with the times of prayer called after them, prays in vain.

The " Revealing Six " are the six beings, namely, Salman and the Five Incomparables, mentioned in the Chapter of Victory (the 6th), or the six days of creation, or the manifestations of God to Abraham, Moses, and other of the prophets.

The " Seven Twinkling Stars " are Saturn, Mars, and the rest.

The " Eight Strong Bearers of the Throne " are the eight Kabalistic words, that is, the names of the Five Incomparables and Talib, Akil, and Jafa at-Taiyar.

The " Nine Gifted with Mohammed-quality " are names of certain of the Strings of Imaumship, from Mohammed Ibn Abdallah to Mohammed aj-Jawad.

The " Ten Chanticleers of Holiness " are the Five Incomparables, together with Naufal, Abu-l-Harith, Mohammed Ibn al-Hana-fiyah, Abu Barzah, and Abdallah Bin Madhlah, whom the Nusairis believe to be the largest of the stars, each having rule over a number of other stars. As al-Khusaibi says in his " Diwan," all the stars are castles of the heavens, mystically, except the ten just mentioned, the Chanticleers, whose cock is Salman al-Farsi. In the secret books of the Northerners, such as the " Book of the Greeks " and others, the cock is said to be Mohammed Bin Abdallah.

The " Eleven Ascension-points of Communicator-quality " are Ruzbah Ibn al-Marzaban, Abu-l-Ala Rashid al-Hajari; Kankar Ibn Abu Khalid al-Kabuli, Yahya Bin Mu'ammar, Jabir Bin Yazid aj-Jufi, Mohammed Ibn

Abu Zainab al-Kahili, al-Mufadhdhal Bin Umar, Umar Bin al-Mufadhdhal, Mohammed Bin Nusair al-Bakri an-Numarri, Dihyah Bin Khalfiah al-Kalbi, and Umm Salamah. The "Twelve Strings of Imaumship" are Mohammed al-Mustafi, al-Hassan al-Mujtabi, al-Hussain the martyr of Karbala, Ali Zain al-Abidin, Mohammed al-Bakir, Ja' far as-Sadik, Musa al Kazim, Ali ai-Ridha, Mohammed al-Jawad, Ali al-Hadi, al-Hassan al-Askari, and Mohammed Bin al-Hassan al-Hujjah.

The fourth chapter is called "The Pedigree." The Nusairian religion originated with Mohammed Bin Nusair; he was followed by Mohammed Ibn Jindab, to whom succeeded Abdallah al-Jannan al Junbulan, of Persia. Then came al-Hussain Bin Hamdan al-Khusaibi, whom the Nusairis esteem superior to all his successors, who taught far and wide, and perfected their prayers.

He taught that the Messiah was Adam, and Enos, and Kainan, and Mahalalil, and Yared, and Enoch, and Methuselah, and Lamech, and Noah, and Shem, and Arphaxad, and Ya'rab, and Hud, and Salih, and Lukman, and Lot, and Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Prince that is Pharaoh, who lived in the days of Joseph; also Moses, and Aaron, and Caleb, and Ezekiel, and Samuel, and David, and Solomon, and Job, and al-Khadir, and Alexander, and Saul, and Daniel, and Mohammed. His general teaching seems to have been that each prophet who has appeared in the world was an incarnation of the Messiah; and that the same is true of certain heathen sages, such as Plato, Galen, Socrates, and Nero; also of certain wise men amongst the Persians, and the Arabs before Mohammed, such as Ardeshir, Sapor, Luwai, Murrah, Kilab, Hashim, Abd Manaf, and others. Moreover, he taught that the mothers of the prophets of past times, and their wives were incarnations of Salman al-Farsi, excepting the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot; and that Salman was incarnate, also, in the eleven named in the third chapter, and in the Queen of Sheba, and the wife of Potiphar; and has appeared in some inanimate objects, as well as in certain wild animals, such as the wolf supposed to have eaten Joseph, and in winged creatures, such as the hoopoe, the

crow, the bee and others. Besides all this, he taught that Ali-Ibu-Abn-Talib was Abel, Seth, Joseph, Joshua, Asaph, Simon Peter, Aristotle, and Hermes ; and has been incarnated in certain wild animals, such as the dog of the Companions of al-Kahf, the camel of Salih, and the cow which Moses commanded to be sacrificed.[1] His disciples numbered fifty-one, of whom five were men of note, namely, Mohammed Bin Ali aj-Jali, Ali Bin Isa, aj-Jasri, al-Iraki, and al-Katani ; and whoever derives his instruction by a line of descent from either of these is regarded by the Nusairis as al-Khusaibi's brother.

To al-Husain Bin Hamdan al-Khusaibi succeeded Maimun Bin Kasmin at-Tabarani, a disciple of Mohammed Bin Ali aj-Jali, and author of many Nusairian books, among which is the "Summary of Festivals," noted for its revilings of Abu-Bekr, Omar, and Othman, whom it calls the three Adversaries, they being considered by the Nusairis as incarnations of Satan. The same author also composed the "Book of Proofs of Divine Knowledge pertaining to the Questions," in which it is said that the wolf supposed to have eaten Joseph was Abd ar-Rahman Bin Muljam al-Muradi, not Salman al-Farisi as other Nusairis believe ; and the "Book of the Compound on the Duties of Pupils" ; and another book, against the religion of Ali Bin Karmat, and Ali Bin Kushkah ; and many others.

The fifth chapter, called "The Victory," is understood by the leaders among the Nusairis to signify that Mohammed is connected with Ali by night, and separated from him by day, taking the Sun to be Mohammed ; and they believe that Mohammed created lord Salman. These three are their Most Holy Trinity, Ali being the Father, Mohammed the Son, and Salman al-Farisi the Holy Ghost. They also declare that lord Salman created the Five Incomparables, and that the Five Incomparables created this whole world as it now exists, and that all the government of the heavens and the earth is in the hands of these Five Incomparables—al-Mikdad presiding over thunder-bolts, lightning-flashes and earthquakes ; Abu-dh-Dharr superintending the gyration of the stars and constellations ; Abdallah Bin Rawahah,

[1] Koran xviii. 8 ff. ; vii. 71 ff. ; ii. 63 ff.

whom they believe to be the same as Azrael, being charged with the winds, and with the arrest of human spirits ; Othman having charge of human diseases, the heat of the body and stomachs ; and Khanbar who is the introducer of spirits into bodies.

The sixth chapter is called " The Bowing of the Head," and is relied on by the Northerners as containing doctrines adverse to the worship which the Kalazians render to the Moon, arguing from an expression in this chapter " Thou producer of the morning sun and creator of the luminous full moon " that the moon is a created thing. To this the Kalazians reply that Ali created the moon in order to inhabit it, as a man builds a house to dwell in, or makes a seat to sit upon ; for they hold that the dark part of the moon represents the Adorable One, who, they also believe, has hands, feet, a body, and a head, and on his head a crown, and in his hand a sword, which is the notched blade of Mohammed.

The seventh chapter is called " The Salutation," and causes much dispute between the Northerners and the Kalazians ; for while the former conclude the long string of salutations enjoined by the phrase " I believe in the lordship of Mohammed," the Kalazians say, " in the lordship of Ali, the Gracious, and accuse their opponents of ascribing lordship to Mohammed and Ali, indifferently. The Northerners reply to this charge by saying that Mohammed and Ali are allied, not alien, to one another ; that while the First Cause is Ali, Mohammed is also a Creator : and that the Kalazians cannot consistently charge them with error in ascribing lordship to the latter, inasmuch as they themselves maintain the doctrine of a Trinity which is held by the Northerners. A long dispute is thus carried on, of which the above is only an outline.

Fourteen " Orders " are mentioned in this seventh chapter. The first seven include the Communicators, the Incomparables, the Pursuivants, the Familiars, the Dignitaries, the Purified, and the Approved, numbering five thousand angels, who constitute what the Nusairis call the great light-world. They believe them to be referred to in the Koran as the " Seven Heavens "[1] and to have existed before

[1] Koran xxiii. 88.

the creation of the world, and to be stars outside of the Milky Way. The other seven include the Offerers, Cherubs, Spirituals, Sanctified, Ramblers, Listeners, and Attendants, numbering one hundred and nineteen thousand, who constitute the so-called " little spirit-world, supposed to be intended by the "Seven Earths" in the Koran.[1] These the Nusairis believe to be the stars of the Milky Way, or spirits purified from the flesh through their acknowledgment of AMS, and of every manifestation of the Deity, from Abel to Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, agreeably to these words in the Diwan of their lord Sheik Ali as-Suwairi:

" Why dost thou not apprehend the parable of light? Lo, God proposes to us a plain parable: God is the Light of the upper world, the heavens, and of the earthly world." This parable is to be found in the Koran, where we read: " God is the Light of the heavens and the earth; His light is as a lamp in a little window," etc.[2]

The eighth chapter is called " The Betokening." It is a confession of unity, and points out how to combat those who revile Abu Bekr, Omar, Othman, and the rest, and all sects which maintain that Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, or the prophets, either ate, drank, had sexual intercourse, or were born of women; for the Nusairis believe that these descended from heaven without bodies, and that the bodies which they inhabited were but semblances. Also how to hide one's religion from those who are not Nusairis, it being a principle with this sect not to disclose their opinions or usages, even to save their lives.

By this chapter are to be distinguished the four parties among the Nusairis: for those who adore the heavens and the twilight, when they recite it, place the right hand upon the breast, applying the inner part of the thumb to the middle finger; the worshippers of the moon either spread out the hand, with the thumb erect, so that it has the shape of the new moon, or else place both hands upon the breast, opening them wide, with the fingers of one upon the other, and the two thumbs erect, so as in this way to represent the shape of the new moon; while the worshippers of the air place one hand upon the breast, lifting up the forefingers,

[1] Koran lxv. 12.

[2] Koran xxiv. 35.

and applying the inner part of the end of the thumb to the inside of the middle finger.

All Nusairis, on finishing the recitation of this chapter, kiss the inner parts of the ends of their fingers three times, and raise them to their heads.

The ninth chapter is called "The Ain of Ali," and treats of the mystery of the Ain.

The tenth chapter is called "The Covenant." "I testify that God is true; that His word is true; that the plain truth is Ali Ibn Abu Talib with the bald temples, the mysterious; that Hell is the abode of unbelievers· that the garden is a pleasure ground for believers, where water meanders beneath the throne, and upon the throne is seated the Lord of all worlds, and the bearers of the throne are the Noble Eight, who present to him the oblation of my exercises, in this my state of discipline, and of the exercises of all believers. In the faith of the mystery of covenant of Ain-Mim-Sin."

The eleventh chapter is called "The Testimony": or, by the common people, "The Mountain." "God certifies, the angels, also, and all imbued with knowledge bear witness, that there is no God besides Him, the doer of justice; that there is no God besides Him, the mighty, the wise. Verily, religion in God's sight is Islam. O our Lord save us by Thy revelation, cause us to follow the Messenger, and so record us among those who firmly testify to Ain-Mim-Sin.

"I testify that I am a Nusairi in religion, a Jandabi in counsel, a Junbulani in habitude, a Khusaibi in doctrine, a Jali as to maxims, a Maimuni in legal science; and I stand fast in expectation of the splendid recurrence, the brilliant return, the withdrawal of the veil, the lighting up of the thick cloud, the manifestation of that which is unseen, the showing forth of the hidden, and the appearance of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib from amid the sun, arresting every soul, with the lion beneath him, the Dhu-l-Fakar in his hand, the angels behind him, and lord Salman before him, while water wells up from between his feet, and lord Mohammed cries out, saying: 'Behold your Sovereign, Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib! Acknowledge him, glorify him, magnify him, exalt him.

Behold your creator and provider! Disown him not! Bear me witness, O my lords, that this is my religion and my faith, whereto I commit myself, whereby I live, wherein I shall die. Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib lives, and will not die; in his hand is destiny, and absolute dominion; in his gift are hearing, seeing, and understanding. Peace be to us from the remembrance of them.'"

The Kalazians claim that expression "and the appearance of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib from amid the sun," in this chapter, as evidence of the correctness of their doctrine, remarking that the moon comes forth to view out of the sunset-sky. The worshippers of the twilight, on account of this expression, fancy that the twilight comes forth from the midst of the sun, while, at the same time, maintaining that the twilight-reddening of the sun creates the sun. The Northerners say that "the sun" is, here, a metonymy for Fatimah, the daughter of Asad, whose child was Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib; for it is the belief of the Northerners, universally, that both she and Fatimah the daughter of Mohammed were the Expressed Deity, that is, Mohammed, who, as they hold, is represented in the sun.

The twelfth chapter, called "The Imaum Chapter," implies that the Nusairis adore a seen, present, not an incommunicative Deity; and that this Deity is Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, whom the Northerners believe to be presented to view in the whole heavens, and the Kalazians suppose to be the moon, each party, accordingly, interpreting the chapter to suit its own views.

The thirteenth chapter is called "The Journeying Chapter." "Let whatsoever is in the heavens, and whatsoever is on the earth, glorify God, the Mighty, the Wise! With the return of morning doth God's whole realm give glory. In the name of God, by the help of God, and in the faith of the mystery of lord Abu Abdallah, whose religion whosoever conforms to, and whose worship whosoever adopts, God brings him to the knowledge of Himself; and whose religion whosoever does not conform to, and whose religion whosoever does not adopt, has God's curse upon him. By the mystery of the Chief, and his peculiar children, may God give happiness to them all."

When the Nusairis find mention made, in their secret books, of any city, they interpret it figuratively as signifying the heavens, and suppose its inhabitants to be stars, agreeably to what is explicitly laid down in the Egyptian Missive, and other books.

The fourteenth chapter is called " The Reverenced House," and originated with the primitive Nusairis, who used it as a method of introduction to the performance of pilgrimage. That is to say, it refers to the house which the Koran commands should be visited, and its underpinnings, roof, and enclosures, as signifying, metaphorically, an acquaintance with persons represented thereby, agreeably to what is said by Sheikh Ibrahim-at-Tusi, in his " Poem of the Letter Ain "—" O, the change of God's house ! which is His Intermediary ; of as-Safa, which is al-Mikdad, tamer of the Adversary ; of Marwah, whereof Abu-dh-Dharr is the memorable personation ; of the ceremonies of the house, which are Salsal, submissive to the Deity ; its enclosing steps, how changed do they present themselves ! The door-ring of the house is Ja'far, star in the ascendant."

The house signifies the Lord Intermediary, the Mim ; as-Safa, al-Mikdad ; the two steps, al-Hassan and al-Hussain ; the door-ring, acquaintance with Ja'far as-Sadik ; al-Marwah, acquaintance with Abu dh-Dharr ; and the sacred place of ceremony, acquaintance with Salman al-Farisi. Such interpretations are distinctly presented in very many books of the Nusairis ; and an acquaintance with the several persons named stands, with them, for the completion of pilgrimage. Moreover, that acquaintance is understood by the Nusairis to be obtainable by sight, in conformity with what is their belief, universally, that the sun is Mohammed.

The zeal of the Moslems in visiting Mecca seems to the Nusairis idle and blameworthy ; and one of their chiefs has expressed himself to this effect in the following words :—

" Cursed be all who forbid the drinking of wine, and all the Syrians, and the pilgrims."

In the Book of Summary of Festivals we find the following passage :[1] " They have assigned to thee a grave, and

[1] *Journale Asiatique*, IVe, Serie xi, 153.

suppose thee to be buried in it; but in truth they practise deceit."

Again, it is said in the "Book of Confirmation," by Sheikh Mohammed al-Kalazi, quoting from the "Book of Light Handling," which the Nusairis believe to have been composed by Jafar as-Sasik, the words of Jafar, when he was inquired of by af-Mufadhdhal with reference to the edifice which the Moslems are so zealous in visiting, imagining it to be GOD's house: "Such visitation is the sum and substance of unbelief; that edifice is a prop of idols, even as it is of stone, like idols, and people are well nigh dolts in visiting it, and short of understanding."

To this al-Kalazi adds: "So I give them for answer, as to this matter, that the practice should be abandoned; and besides, there are places of pilgrimage, and trees, innumerable, which they may visit, nearer than the Kaabah; so idle a proceeding verifies in them the words of the poet, who says: 'Thou boastest, O my brother, of strange things: of a jaundiced physician administering to his fellow men: of a weaver who is always naked of clothing: and of an oculist prescribing collyrium, who is himself blind;' and those of another poet: 'The physician sets himself to administer to others, and forgets his own pain-stricken heart.'"

The fifteenth chapter is called "The Chapter of the Intermediary." The sixteenth chapter is called "The Chapter of Pursuivants." It recites the names of certain Pursuivant-lords, whom Mohammed chose as disciples, which it is unnecessary to give here.

CHAPTER XVIII

RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS OF THE NUSAIRIS

In the second and third sections of his book Sulaiman gives us information as to the festivals of the Nusairis; the prayers used at them; the various offices of the three Orders of chiefs, namely Imaums, Pursuivants and Dignitaries, and their respective duties and mutual relations with the congregations of the believers. In his description of the ceremonies observed on festival occasions he introduces various liturgical forms not usually known.

Sulaiman remarks that these annual celebrations had an ancient origin, and are carefully perpetuated; the necessary expenses are borne by the wealthier members of the sect, every rich Nusairi binding himself to defray the cost of one, two or three of the celebrations, according to the measure of his zeal. In towns they are held in the evening, for the sake of secrecy, but this precaution is not always observed in the country villages. He also states that the Nusairi villagers give themselves up to special festivity on their New Year's Day, the 1st of Second Kanum, or January, and show less regard for certain seasons observed with special ceremonies among the Moslems as well as themselves, while the inhabitants of towns avoid such discrimination, lest the Moslems should find them out.

The following list of Nusairian festivals, drawn up, apparently, in the order of their estimation, is given by the author, with the distinct understanding of it not including all.

1. Festival of al-Ghadir, on the 18th of Dhu-l-Hajjah.
2. ,, of al-Udhhiyah, on the 10th of Dhu-l-Hajjah. (This is a memorial of Ismail Ibn Hajir.)

3. Festival of al-Maharjan, on the 16th of First Tishrin.
4. „ of Al-Barbarah, on the 14th of Second Tishrin.
5. „ after an interval of a week from the last.
6. „ after an interval of a week from the last.
7. „ of the Birth-time of lord Messiah, on the 15th of First Kanum.
8. „ of the Baptism, on the 6th of Second Kanum.
9. „ of 17th Adhar.
10. „ of 1st Nisan.
11. „ of 4th Nisan.
11. „ of 15th Nisan.
13. „ of 9th of First Rabi, called the 2nd Ghadir.
14. „ on the night of the 15th of Sha'ban.

In connection with this list certain other festivals are enumerated, without specification of the times when they are celebrated, namely, the Festival of John the Baptist, and of John Chrysostom, the Festival of Palms and of the Element, and the Festival of Mary Magdalene. The following seasons of special observance are also mentioned: the first night of Ramadhan, and the seventeenth, nineteenth, twenty-first and twenty-third nights of that month. The whole enumeration by Sulaiman agrees, for the most part, with Catafago's list, published in the *Journal Asiatique* for 1848,[1] though each author names some celebrations not noticed by the other.

When a festival-day arrives, the men assemble at the house of the master of the festival, that is, the person at whose expense it is celebrated; and the Imaum takes a seat among them. Then there is placed before him a piece of white cloth, on which are laid mahlab berries, camphor, candles, and myrtle or olive leaves.

A vessel filled with wine of pressed grapes, or figs, is brought forward, and two Pursuivants seat themselves on either side of the Imaum. Then the Master of the Festival designates another Pursuivant to act as the minister of the occasion, and coming forward kisses the Imaum's hand, and the hand of each of the Pursuivants seated by his side,

[1] *Journal Asiatique*, IVe, Serie xi, 149–55.

as well as that of the Pursuivant selected to perform the service. The latter then rises, and places his two hands upon his breast, saying: "May God grant you a good evening, my lords, and a pleasant and happy morning! Is it your pleasure that I minister for you at this blessed festival (or, blessed time), over the cup of so-and-so, the Master of the Ceremonies? God bless him." To this those present reply: "Yes" whereupon the Pursuivant, making his obeisance to the assembly, by kissing the ground, takes in his hand some myrtle leaves, and distributes them, reciting, meanwhile, the following, called the "Myrtle String": "God hath said: 'If he is one of those promoted to honour, he shall have rest, and gentle puffs of air, and a garden of delight'[1]; O God, let thy benediction rest upon the names of the myrtle personations, namely, Sa'sa'h Bin Sahan, Zaid Bin Suhan al-Abdi, the most excellent and meritorious Ammar Bin Yasir, Mohammed Ibn-Abu-Bekr, and Mohammed Ibn-Abu-Hudhaifah—may divine benedictions rest upon them all."

These words are likewise recited by all present, who rub in their hands, meanwhile, the myrtle leaves, and smell them. Afterwards, the Pursuivant takes a basin of water, puts into it some mahlab berries and camphor, and reads a mass, as follows:—

"The Perfume Mass"

"O, ye believers, have regard to this, your Demigod, in whose presence ye are assembled, and put away hatred from your hearts, and doubt and malice from your breasts, that your worship may be perfected by acquaintance with your Indicator, that your invocation may be accepted, and that our Lord, and yours, may honour your hospitality. Know ye that Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib abides with you, is present among you, hearing and seeing, and that he knows whatsoever is above the seven heavens, as well as whatsoever is beneath the ground, and is acquainted with secret thoughts, the mighty one, the forgiving. Beware, beware, O brothers, of being merry and laughing aloud, in prayer-time, as do the fools; for such behaviour invalidates ceremonies, brings

[1] Koran lvi, 87, 88.

on catastrophes, and impairs what is virtuous in conduct. But hearken to and hear the commands of the lord Imaum ; for he stands among you, as it were, in the majesty of the infinite, the supreme, the omniscient One. We, being thus minded, have mingled for you this perfume, as the heavens are blended with the seven signs of Imaumship, on the peerless necklace of souls existing in substance, disencumbered of fleshly, human, bald-templed form. With those seven regale ye your chaste souls, pure from all wicked deeds. Therewith doth the Mim endow the Sin in every age, and at all times—I affirm it on oath so that he is Ali, a God, to whom sincere worship is due, beside whom all beings invoked by men are a lie (seeing that to worship the creature is an idle fancy), for he—let him be exalted, and let his state be magnified !—is, in the height of his dignity, the all-informed, the omniscient, the august Supreme."

He then pours upon the Imaum's hand a spoonful of the perfumed water, and gives the basin to the Dignitary, that he may do the same upon the hand of each person present. While the Dignitary is thus going the round, he reads the following, called

The Perfume String

" God hath said : ' The unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were each a solid mass, and that we have ruptured them, and, by means of water, produced every living thing—will they not then believe ?'[1] Glory be to him who vivifies the lifeless, in a land of freezing cold. By the power of our Lord, the almighty Supreme—omnipotent is God !—omnipotent is God ! "

All present likewise recite this formula, laving their faces the while. Then the Pursuivant takes a censer, and stands up, and reads the second mass :

The Incense Mass

" The mass of incense, and of exhaled odours, circling about in the reverenced house, in the dwelling of our God, a dwelling of joy and gladness. Someone says that our chief and lord, Mohammed Bin Sinan az-Zahiri—peace be

[1] Koran, xxi. 31.

to us from him—was accustomed to stand up for the Friday prayer, every day and night, once or twice, taking in his hand a ruby, or, as is also said, a sapphire, or, according to another report, a chrysolite, which was consecrated to the brilliant Fatimah, and incensing cups, with perfection of cheer, incensing the servant of light, therewith, amid festive decoration and glitter. Know ye, O believers, that the light is Mohammed, and the night Salman. Incense your cups, and light your lamps, and say all of you : Praise be to God, praise be to God, for favour unsurpassed, and whose mystery defying penetration has been bestowed upon us—bountiful, noble, exalted, august is he ! Believe and be assured, O believers, that the person of the servant of light is free to you, among yourselves, and forbidden to you in the company of others."

In a note to this formula, the author says that what is meant here by " the servant of light " is wine ; that is, wine is here presented as an image of Ali.

After this the Pursuivant incenses the Imaum, as well as the two seated by his side, and gives the censer to the Dignitary, so that he may incense the rest of the Assembly.[1] While going his round, this official recites what is called

The Incense String

" O God, give benediction and peace to our Lord Mohammed, the elect, and his sons. May the divine benediction rest upon them all."

The receivers of the incense also recite this formula. Afterwards the Pursuivant takes a cup in his hand, and, standing up, reads the third mass ; the " Call to Prayer." This, though a very beautiful recital of adoration, is a repetition of most of the " Perfume Mass," and need not be given here. He then presents the cup to the Imaum, and, filling another, gives it to the person seated on the Imaum's right, and hands a third to the one seated on his left ; each of whom recites the following : " I testify that my Lord, and thine, is the Prince of Bees, Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, who

[1] An account of these ceremonies, in most points corroborating Sulaiman's, is given in Lyde's *Asian Mystery*, as given to the author by a young Nusairi Initiate.

is unconditioned, imperishable, unchangeable; and I testify that his Intermediary is lord Mohammed, and his Communicator lord Salman; and the Communicator proceeds not from between the Archetypal Deity and the Expressed Deity." After this the presenter of the cup says to each: "Take, O my brother, this cup in thy right hand, and ask help of thy Lord, Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, thy ruler and helper." To this each communicant replies: "Give, O my brother, that which is in thy right hand, and ask help of thy Lord and Creator, thy ruler and helper in matters of thy religion—may God make it to flourish with His affluence, by the suretyship of Mohammed and his race." Afterwards, the Pursuivant rises, and placing his hands upon his breast says: "May God grant you a good evening, O brothers, and a pleasant morning, O people of the faith! Forgive us any errors or negligences; for man is so called only because he lapses into error, and absolute perfection pertains only to our Lord, the glorious Ali, who is omniscient." He then kisses the ground, and sits down.

Then the Imaum, facing the assembly, says: "May God grant you a good evening, O brothers, and a pleasant morning, O people of the faith. Is it your pleasure that I should minister for you, on this blessed day, over the cup of the Master of Ceremonies!—God bless him?" He kisses the ground, which the assembly also do, striking two octaves with the words: "We accept thee as our chief and lord." The Imaum then says: "It is a tradition on the authority of our lord Ja'far as-Sadik, the reticent and declarer, the render and binder,[1] that he said: 'At prayer-time it is forbidden either to take, to give, to sell, to buy, to report the news, to whisper, to be noisy, to be restless, or to tell stories, over the myrtle: but let there be silence, listening attention, and saying of Amen.' Know ye, O brothers, that if anyone wears upon his head a black turban, or carries on his finger a kishtban, or at his waist a two-edged knife, his prayer is hindered: and the greatest of sins is to fail in duty over the myrtle; for what is binding upon a messenger if not manifest vigilance?" Then he kisses the ground, saying: "This homage to God, and to you, O brothers!"

[1] Another reference to the fructification of the earth.

after which all who are present prostrate themselves, kiss the ground, raise their hands to their heads, and say: "To God—let him be exalted—be thy homage paid, O our chief and lord!"

Afterwards the Imaum reads the "Formula of Disburdening."

After a long string of terrible curses against individuals, which it is unnecessary to give here, the Formula goes on:—

"Do thou curse the Hanifite, Shafiite, Malikite, and Hanbalite sects, and those who play with apes, and catch hold of black serpents, together with all Christians and Jews, and everyone who believes that Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib ate, or drank, or was born, or had sexual intercourse—may God curse them. Moreover, lay thou the curse upon John Marun the Patriarch,[1] the execrable, and upon all those who feed on thy bounties, while they worship not thee; and do thou rid us of them utterly, as flesh is cleared from a bone, by the suretyship of Ali, Mohammed and Salman, and by the favour of Ain-Mim-Sin."

Then he wipes his hand upon his breast, saying to those present: "We disburden ourselves of these vile Satans, the heretics, in dependence on the favour of Ain-Mim-Sin," which those assembled repeat, kissing one another's hands to the right and left: after which the Imaum reads the Chapter of the Opening, and the Chapter of the Two Deficiencies, together with all that follows, up to the Chapter of the Sun and the Chapter of Broad Sunshine,[2] and also the throne-verse,[3] and other verses of the Koran, at his pleasure. When he has done reading, after reciting a prayer, the Imaum goes on with certain other forms, glorifying and adoring Ali, and recites many masses. All then raise their hands to their breasts, and recite the Chapter of Betokening (see p. 160), each party performing the action of raising hands in his own way, as explained in the notes on that chapter. When this recitation is over, the Imaum takes in his hands a cup of wine, and reads a tradition authorized by al-Hussain Bin Hamdan al-Khusaibi, in which

[1] The first patriarch of the Maronites, who held office about A.D. 700; see *Assemanni Bibl. Orient.*, i. 496.
[2] Koran i. and lxxxiii–xciii.
[3] Ibid. ii. 256.

Ali is set forth as the one true God: afterwards he directs the assembly to bow the head, which they do while reciting the Sixth Chapter (see p. 159); then he takes the cup which is in the hand of him who sits on his right, and mingles its wine with his own, saying, as he mingles; "Seest thou yonder? Seest thou? O delightsomeness! O great magnificence! They are arrayed in green silk gauze and brocade, and their Lord gives them pure wine to drink. Verily this is your portion; your zeal will surely be recompensed."

Next he recites the Ninth Chapter (see p. 161), the assembly repeating after him, and then drinks a little from one of the two cups, and presents it to him who sits on his right. Then he takes the third cup[1] from him who sits on his left, drinks a little of that, and gives it back to him, and presents the cup which he still retains to the ministering Pursuivant: and so the cups pass round among them, from one to another; and as they are offered, each offerer kisses the hand of the receiver, saying to him: "Be thou extolled!—drink, O my brother and lord, in the faith of the mystery of Ain-Mim-Sin"; whereupon he takes the cup, and drinks, saying to the offerer: "May God give thee to drink, O my brother and lord." To this the offerer replies: "May God cheer thee through thy fellowship of the cup, and thy draught, and cause thee to attain to thy goal, and that which thou seekest after!" When the offering of the cup is over, the assembly pronounce an "Amen"; then the Imaum reads some verses from the Koran as follows: "TSM—those are marks of the Plain Book. Perchance thou wearest thyself out with grief, because they are not believers: if we please, we will reveal to them a sign from heaven to which their necks will bow,"[2] adding: "To God, O believers, bend."

When this direction has been obeyed by the recitation of the Sixth Chapter, as before, the Chapter of Salutation (see p. 159) is read by the Imaum, and repeated by the

[1] The various libations mentioned in the course of this ceremony might well be the source of the introduction of similar repeated libations in the ritual of Knights Templar.

[2] Koran xxvi. 1–3.

assembly, after which the Imaum reads the Second Mass of "The Incense String," (see p. 169) and then concludes his prayer with three Melodies by al-Hussain Bin Hamdan al-Khusaibi, the assembly repeating them after him.

Then, facing the assembly, he says: "Forgive us, O brothers, any errors or negligences, and addition or omission; for all men are prone to negligence and forgetfulness, and absolute perfection pertains only to your Master—the Exalted—to the Glorious One, whose knowledge is all surpassing. This homage to God and to you, O brothers, O believers!" He then kisses the ground, and the assembly also kiss it, responding to him: "To God be thy homage paid O our Chief and Lord." After this, all standing up, they kiss the hands of one another, on the right and left, and near by and, at the same moment, the candles are extinguished, as it is day, and the Master of the Festival gives alms to the Imaum and the ministering Pursuivant, which are called *dirhams*, as well as to all who have joined in the recitations.

Then the Imaum takes in his hand the Summary, and reads a little of it to the assembly and bids them bend, which they do as before; and after that directs the one who sits on his right to read the Right-hand Invocation and then directs all to recite the Chapter of Salutation (see p. 159), and when this is finished, bids him who sits on his left to read the Left-hand Invocation, and at the close says: "This homage to God, and to you, O brothers, all ye who are present." He again kisses the ground, while the assembly do likewise, and also kiss the hands of one another, on the right and left; whereupon the Imaum stands up, and uncovers his head; the assembly do the same; he directs them to recite the Chapter of The Opening,[1] saying "The Chapter of the Opening, O brothers, has to do with the subversion of the dynasty of Othman, and the succour of the people of al-Khusaibi, the Nusairis." Frequently, to this petition is added a petition to Ali for the overthrow of all Moslem rulers.

In conclusion, the Ministers rise and place food before the assembly, presenting most of it to the Imaum, who

[1] Koran i.

distributes a little to those near him; after which they all eat, and disperse.

Having thus recounted the ceremonies usually observed at the festivals of the Nusairis, Sulaiman also specifies some customs which are peculiar to certain occasions. At the festivals in the month of Nisan, of the 17th of Adhar, and of the 16th of First Tishrin, when they begin their prayers, there is placed before the Imaum a large basin of water, with twigs of olive, myrtle, or willow in it; and as soon as prayers are over, all uncover their heads, and the Dignitary stands up and sprinkles over them some of the water, and distributes a few of the twigs, which they place in their bee-hives to obtain good luck. Whenever they recite the Chapter of the Bowing of the Head (see p. 159), they bend to the ground, excepting on the day of al-Ghadir, when in reading it, they raise their heads heavenwards.

CHAPTER XIX

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND DEEPER MYSTERIES OF THE NUSAIRI RELIGION

All the Nusairis believe, says Sulaiman, that the spirits of the chiefs of the Moslems, firmly grounded in the science of their religion, assume, at death, the bodily forms of asses; that Christian ministers enter into the bodies of swine: that Jewish rabbis take the form of male apes; and as for the wicked of their own sect, that their spirits enter into the bodies of quadrupeds used for food, sceptics of note excepted who, after death, are changed into male apes. Persons of mixed character, partly good and partly bad, become invested with human bodies in other sects. When a professor of some other belief apostatizes, and is united with them, they hold that in past incarnations he was one of themselves, and that his birth within the pale of that faith which he abandons was consequent upon some crime which he had committed.

No member of any alien sect is admitted into their fraternity, for the first time, unless he be a Persian, the Persians being believers in the divinity of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib like themselves. There is little doubt the progenitors were from Persia and Irak. "In Jewish history they are said to have originated in Palestine," goes on this author, "and this statement is not groundless, inasmuch as they hold many principles in common with people of that country, such as the worship of the sun and the moon. But, unquestionably, Magians are found among them, so that their worship may be of Magian origin, and they may be practising in the present time rites which are none other than Magian.

"As for one of their faith by birth, who apostatizes, their judgment respecting the separatist is that his mother was an adulteress among them, being of that sect whose creed he adopts. They simulate all sects, and, on meeting with Moslems, swear to them that they likewise fast and pray. But their fasting is after a worthless manner: and, if they enter a mosque in company with Moslems, they recite no prayer, but lowering and raising their voices in imitation of their companions, curse Abu Bekr, Omar, Othman, and other persons. The simulation of sects is set forth by them, allegorically, as follows: 'We, say they, are the body, and all other sects are the clothings; but whatever sort of clothing a man may put on, it injures him not; and whosoever does not thus simulate is a fool, for no reasonable person will go naked in the market-place.' I will specify, however, a token by which the dissembler may be recognized: when a Nusairi disavows the worship of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib it may be known that he sets light by his belief, since he could not so express himself without having abandoned his religion; or, when a Nusairi reveals his form of prayer, it is certain that he has apostatized, for thus says their lord al-Khusaibi: 'Whoever discloses our testimony is forbidden our garden; and if anyone says to you—' Disclose, and be guiltless, hasten away.'

"A token by which members of the sect recognize one another is as follows: If a stranger comes among his fellow-believers, he inquires: 'I have a relative: do you know him?' To this they reply: 'What is his name?' He then says—'His name is al-Hussain,' when they rejoin: 'Ibn Hamdan,' and he adds 'al-Khusaibi.'[1]

"A second token consists in their saying to the stranger: 'Thy uncle was unsettled—for how many periods?' To which if he replies 'Sixteen,' they receive him.[2] A third is the question: 'If thy uncle should thirst, whence wouldst thou give him to drink?' To this the answer is: 'From the fountain of Ali-quality.' A fourth token is this inquiry:

[1] Here we have, in all probability, the source of the Masonic custom of "lettering or halving" passwords in perambulating the Lodge during certain ceremonies.

[2] An allusion to the successive stages of divine manifestation down to Ali, sixteen in number.

'Should thine uncle's feet sink in the sand, whither wouldst thou direct him?' The answer to this is: 'To the Serpent of Mu'awiyah.'[1] A fifth question is: 'Should thine uncle annoy where wouldst thou meet him?' The answer being: 'In the Pedigree Chapter' (see p. 157). Then comes the following dialogue: 'Four, two fours, three and two, and as many more, twice over, in thy religion, what place have they?' The answer to this is: 'In the Journeying Chapter' (see p. 162). 'Portion them out to me, wilt thou?' 'Seventeen of them of Irak, seventeen of Syria, and seventeen unknown.' 'Where are they to be found?' 'At the gate of the city of Harran.' 'What is their employment?' 'They receive justly, and render justly.' The binding adjuration among the Nusairis, universally, is to place one's hand in that of another, saying: 'I adjure thee by thy faith, in the faith of the covenant of Ali the Prince of Believers and by the covenant of Ain-Mim-Sin;' this makes it obligatory to speak the truth. Another form is to moisten a finger with one's spittle, and place it on the other's neck, saying: 'I am absolved of my sins, and lay them on thy neck; and I adjure thee, by the foundation of thy religion, by the mystery of the covenant of Ain-Mim-Sin, that thou tell me the whole truth touching such and such a matter,' which also debars from falsehood. The latter form of adjuration is more established with the Northerners than with the Nusairis of other parties; whoever takes it falsely, supposes himself to assume all the sins of the adjurer.

"All the Nusairis imagine the eminent chiefs of their sect to have no sexual intercourse with their wives: but they make passes over them, by which they conceive. But among the Imaums of the Kalazians conjugal communism is said to be a law of hospitality, supported in part by a figurative interpretation of Koran xxxiii, 49, and partly by inference from one of ten rules of life attributed to Ja'far as-Sadik, enjoining upon every believer to gratify his fellow-believers as he would gratify himself, which the Northerners understand to require only a readiness to impart of one's

[1] Meaning, of course, Ali, the biter of the heel, as it were, of Mu'awiyah, who nevertheless brought to an end his temporal dominion.

knowledge and property to a fellow-believer. It is also worthy of notice that the common people among the Nusairis regard their Imaums as infallible, and as having bodies not subject to the ordinary necessities of flesh and blood.

"If anyone who has abjured their faith passes by when they are at prayer, that prayer is spoiled, and they repeat it over again. They must not pray at all on the same day that they hear a story told."

After Sulaiman had been three years an Initiate he bribed one of the chiefs of the party of Northerners to disclose to him the hidden mystery, his advance in the sect being hindered by a suspicion of his holding even then heretical opinions.

The chief undertook to present to Sulaiman proofs of the divinity of the heavens, instancing the Prophet's words in the Koran: "Whithersoever ye turn, there is GOD's presence—GOD is omnipresent, omniscient,"[1] to which he added: "Know thou that in the name of Ali there are three letters, and that the words for the heavens, the twilight, the glimmering day, and the arching sun all have three letters which is a plain proof of the correctness of our doctrine. Hast thou not read the Chapter of Testimony in the Dustur, which says: 'He is immeasurable, illimitable, incomprehensible, inscrutable?'[2] And know thou, O my son, that sight cannot reach to the limit of the heavens, nor can anyone behold them in their prime configuration, that is, their real aspect, save only the Expressed Deity.

"'Know thou also,' continued the chief, 'that the dog of the Companions of al-Kahf was an impersonation of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib; that he appeared to the seven youths who had fled from the Emperor Decian in the form of a dog, in order to try their faith and to prove them: and that, inasmuch as they believed in him, they were elevated to the heavens, and became stars. Previously, he appeared to the Children of Israel in the form of a cow, when they had grievously sinned, and the earth had wellnigh swallowed them up, and so they who believed were delivered, while the doubting were engulfed in the earth, such as Korah and his company. In the Koran, this cow is said to have

[1] Koran ii. 109. [2] See the Chapter of Testimony, p. 161.

been sacrificed, by which is meant that she was perfectly recognized. He appeared also to the people of Salih, in the form of a camel, which they mutilated, that mutilation signifying a rejection, on account of which they perished, and their city was turned upside down. Many other of his manifestations we leave unnoticed."

Shortly after this interview, his doubts as to the truth of the Nusairian tenets increasing, Sulaiman renounced his faith altogether, and became a Jew, and subsequently a Christian.

CHAPTER XX

THE "HOUSE OF WISDOM" AT CAIRO, AND THE FOUNDING OF THE DRUSE SECT BY EL DORAZI AND HAMZEH

During the reign of the Abbasside dynasty, Abu Mohammed Abdallah, who claimed to be a descendant of Ali by Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, and who claimed the Caliphate for this reason, succeeded in detaching from the sway of the Abbassides, who were then living in magnificent Oriental luxury on the banks of the Tigris, the whole of Arabia, Syria, Egypt, and the provinces west of it. He was the founder of the Fatimite dynasty, and established his throne at Cairo. Upholding Ismael as the founder of his "Path," and one of his descendants as the seventh Imaum, he took vigorous steps for the propagation of his system.

"No history of the Fatimites," says Ameer Ali,[1] "can be complete without some mention of the extraordinary propaganda established by them, for in their desire to promote the diffusion of knowledge among their subjects, they did not ignore the political advantages of obtaining proselytes to their sect. To the central *Dar-ul-Likmat*, 'House of Science,' was attached a Grand Lodge, where the candidates for initiation into the esoteric doctrines of Ismaelism were instructed. Twice a week, every Monday and Wednesday, the *Dai-ud-Daawat*, the Grand Prior of the Lodge, convened meetings, which were frequented by both men and women, dressed in white, occupying separate seats. These assemblages were named *Majalis-ul-Likmat*, or 'philosophical conferences.' Before the initiation the *Dai-ud-Daawat* waited on the Imaum (the Caliph),

[1] *A Short History of the Saracens*, p. 615.

the Grand Master, and read to him the discourse he proposed to deliver to the neophytes, and received his sign manual on the cover of the manuscript. After the lecture the pupils kissed the hands of the Grand Prior, and reverently touched the signature of the Master with their foreheads. Makrisi's account of the different degrees of initiation adopted in the Lodge[1] forms an invaluable record of Freemasonry. In fact, the Lodge at Cairo became the model of all the Lodges created afterwards in Christendom."

In this last assertion I am myself greatly in agreement, as it seems exceedingly evident, in considering the rituals and ceremonies of these Syrian secret sects, that herein are to be found very many of the foundations of our modern rituals, in many of the degrees allied to Freemasonry, as well as primarily in the three degrees of the Craft.

Abu Ali el-Hakem li-Amr-illah, usually known as El Hakem, the sixth of the Fatimite dynasty, was born in A.D. 985 (A.H. 375) and succeeded to his father's throne at the early age of eleven. All historians agree that his reign, which extended to a period of twenty-five years, is distinguished only for its folly and tyranny, and he is stigmatized as an impious and bloodthirsty monster, the sanity of whose mind appears to be very doubtful. Many pages could be filled with even a condensed account of his awful cruelties. Anyone doubting the exclusive claims of Ali to divinity and the caliphate was promptly massacred.

About the year 1017 a Persian named Mohammed Ibn Ismail el-Dorazi came to the court of Egypt. He was graciously received by El Hakem, and appointed to one of the first offices in the state. Dorazi appears to have published assertions of divinity previously claimed in private by Hakem, and ventured to read these in the principal mosque, in the presence of a large multitude. Though supported by the whole strength, public and secret, of the Caliph, who was to be made the object of adoration, the new doctrines were most unfavourably received by the turbulent and fanatical mob. Dorazi had to fly, to escape their threatened violence, and he was sent by Hakem to Wady

[1] Further details of these degrees, as given by Makrisi, will be found in Chapter XII, in dealing with the Karmathians.

el-Teim, the great valley which separates the Lebanon from Hermon, with the view of making proselytes among the people of that region. The inhabitants of that valley, already belonging to the Batenite, or Schiite secret sect, appear to have been prepared to receive a new and modified form of their Ismaelian religion. Dorazi gave his name to the Druse nation, as is generally accepted, although Colonel Churchill says that some of the Druse Akkals, or priests, prefer it to the Arab word "Durs," which signifies clever, or industrious; while others deduce it from "Turs," or shield, because, they say, in the days of Nouradeen and Saladin they were selected to watch and defend the Syrian coast, from Beyrout to Sidon.

But Dorazi is held in no respect by the Druses, although they accept, and retain, the doctrine of the divinity of Hakem which he thus promulgated amongst them. But the power of his position aroused in him ambitious designs. He attempted to introduce heretical innovations into the very doctrines he had been sent to inculcate, and seems to have aimed at converting the influence of a missionary into the independence of a rival prophet.

However, after his departure from Cairo, another Persian appeared, and took his place. This was Hamzeh Ibn-Ahmed, surnamed El-Hady, who may be regarded as the real founder of the Druse religion. Hakem had succeeded in establishing in Egypt a belief in his own divinity, and obtained something like sixteen thousand converts. Hamzeh became successively his follower, his vizier, the director of the new sect, and an object of veneration almost as great as Hakem himself.

The disciple whom Hamzeh sent to replace Dorazi was named Moktana Baha-edeen. He it was who may be said to have placed the Druse religion on the basis on which it at present stands. His numerous tracts and epistles have ever been the chief subjects of study and contemplation in the Druse Khalwehs.

"Nevertheless, the teaching of Dorazi was too seducing in its tendency to be ever entirely abandoned by many who had once reconciled themselves to a system of theology, which, under the imposing epithet of the Mysteries, threw a cloak over the indulgence of the worst passions of human

nature. The schism was never eradicated, and to this day the Druses are divided into two sects, who, although bound together in a common faith in the Hakim and Hamzeh, are actuated, respectively, in their conduct, by the purer and more orthodox moral and religious teaching of Baha-edeen, or by the dark and unscrupulous libertinism of Dorazi. The former, it is but just to say, form a great majority; the latter are ever ready for the indulgence and committal of every kind of lust and atrocity." [1]

Dorazi, however, exercised his authority for a sufficient number of years to enable him to stamp his name on the sect which first arose under his auspices; and to this circumstance it is owing that all the followers of the doctrines preached by Hamzeh, instead of being called Hamzeites as they might and ought to have been, are called Druses.

"Into that system," says the Earl of Carnarvon,[2] "Hamzeh introduced every element of strength or attraction. The Mohammedan was reconciled by the profession of Unitarianism; the Schiites, or followers of Ali, were already enlisted by sympathy for a Fatimite Caliph; the Sufeistic, or mystical sects, which then, as ever, had their seat in Persia, and the far East, were allured by the esoteric doctrines and allegorical interpretations, whose existence must have easily betrayed itself to the initiated; even the Karmathites, the Ismaelis, the Ansairis, were is some degree influenced by the ties of blood and locality, and the Christian was only required, by a simple process of conversion, to apply the familiar precepts of the Gospel to the faith of Hakem and Hamzeh. Thus blending the doctrines of the Pentateuch, the Christian Gospel, the Koran, and the Sufee allegories, men were taught that seven mighty prophets in succession, whose order numbered not only Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses, but also our Saviour, had guided and instructed the world in its various periods, and that their ministrations were closed by Mohammed, the Prophet of Mecca, and Mohammed the son of Ismael, the author and head of the last and mystical development of the Faith."

"The real facts of the case are," says Chasseaud,[3] "that

[1] Churchill, *The Druses and the Maronites*, p. 12.
[2] *Recollections of the Druses of the Lebanon*, p. 60.
[3] Chasseaud, *The Druses of the Lebanon*, p. 369.

the Druse creed possessing items of every acknowledged religion is itself a marvellous fable, evidently collected from every existing creed, and yet so badly arranged that it contains in itself no plausible theory, and nothing that will admit of investigation. They tamely submit to the supposed superior knowledge of their Akkals, men, in reality, possessed of but little knowledge, and who might meet with a parallel in the professors of a faith in many lands claiming to greater civilisation than the Lebanon.

"The word Akkal, which means sober or quiet, is very properly applied to the people who bear that name; for, in reality, the Akkals are the more quiet, good, and sober part of the Druse population; their whole lives are devoted to doing good, and they meet several times in the week in their Khalwehs, or sacred edifices, (or, as we should say, their Lodge-rooms,) where they discuss their creed, and give each other good advice."

So much for the description from a non-Masonic point of view. It would seem clear, from the ceremonies of initiation into the sect described in a later chapter, as experienced by an American traveller who had been admitted a member of the sect, that these Akkals have attained to higher degrees in that Order of Masonry which has been preserved amongst these Syrian peoples from the very earliest periods of the world's history.

The class of Akkals is not necessarily restricted to the male part of the population; women are often admitted, provided they are of certain age, and are prepared to subject themselves to the same system of self-denial which characterizes the men. The following is the course of proceeding which is adopted when a person is desirous of joining the Order. A necessary preliminary is, that the person who is a candidate for the honour of admission into the sacred corps should intimate his intention to an Akkal, upon which a special meeting is held. This is a very solemn affair, and the ordeal one of the strictest imaginable. An inquiry takes place into the general character and conduct of the aspirant; his whole life is passed in review; his habits criticized, and everything that is known respecting him fully discussed.

Supposing him not to have been guilty of any crime, and to be well recommended, the next step is that he should be made acquainted with the requisitions of the Druse religion, which are then clearly set before him ; and he is informed that to be worthy of becoming an Akkal, he must forthwith abandon every vice, and relinquish all the idle habits he may hitherto have indulged in. He must not smoke, or drink wine or spirits ; neither must he take snuff ; he must be content to wear the plainest apparel (this is perhaps aimed at the fairer portion of the Akkal society) ; and, in short, laying aside every thought of splendour and luxury, must only consider how he can best show, in his demeanour and life, a firm devotion to the simple habits and sacred principles of the Order of which he now desires to become an adopted member.

But this is not enough ; the capability to lead a holy life is not always equal to the desire. A temporary excitement of religious tendencies, a more than ordinary warmth of imagination, a sudden calamity, may for a time awaken the stings of conscience, and affect the tenderest sensibilities of the heart ; but the good impressions too often yield before the force of temptation, and the dormant energies which have been aroused for the moment sink back into their wonted lethargy ; or a zeal untempered by knowledge proves that we have undertaken a burden too heavy for us to bear, and that we had better not have put our hand to the plough if we cannot forbear to look back.

The wise Akkals, therefore, are not satisfied with the best of promises. They require a little proof, and to this end they allow the candidate for admission into their ranks a certain fixed period, varying in duration according to the man's previous life, before the lapse of which he is expected to have made up his mind finally as to his capability of conforming faithfully, for the rest of his life, to the tenets of so strict and severe a profession. During this period of probation all his actions and pursuits are closely watched and scrupulously noted ; and should he, at the end of this allotted time, still evince a desire to become an Akkal, he is then admitted into the Khalwehs, and suffered to attend some of their religious meetings and listen to an exposition

of their creed and doctrines. Twelve months are now devoted to his religious education, at the end of which time he is considered to be sufficiently tried and instructed to assume the title of Akkal. Then the ceremony of donning the white turban takes place, for by this white turban the Akkals are recognized; and he is thereupon admitted into all the mysteries of the faith, and becomes one of the initiated brethren.

The sect is divided into the three degrees, Profanes, Aspirants and Wise. A Druse who has entered the second may return to the first degree, but incurs death if he reveals what he has learned. Heckethorn [1] refers to the allegation that they worship a calf's head in their secret meetings, but agrees that it is more probable " this effigy represents the principle of falsehood and evil, Iblis, the rival and enemy of Hakim. The Druses have been accused, as mentioned above, in common with other Syrian (and probably all other) secret sects, of licentious orgies, and they are said by Bespier, in his *Remarks on Ricaut* (an English diplomatist who wrote in 1700) to marry their own daughters; but according to other evidence, including that of neighbouring Christians, a young Druse, as soon as he is initiated, gives up all dissolute habits, and becomes, at least in appearance, quite another man, meriting, as in other initiations, the title of " new-born."

According to Druse traditions, the world was, at the appearance of God, in the form of Hakim three thousand, four hundred and thirty million years old, and they believe, like certain sects in England and America, that the millennium is close at hand.

Every village has its meeting place (Khalweh), where religious and political affairs are discussed every Thursday night, the Wise, men and women, attending. The resolutions passed at such meetings are communicated to the district meetings, which again report to the general assembly in the town of Baklin, on Mount Lebanon. This was the fortified seat of government until, in the last century, Deir-el-Kammar (the Moon-Monastery), was built as the Lebanon metropolis. At the general assembly the questions raised at the district

[1] Heckethorn, *Secret Societies*, vol. i. p. 128. London, 1874.

meetings are discussed, and the deputies from the different villages who have attended, on their return home, announce the decisions arrived at ; so that the Druses, in fact, have a regular family council, to which, however, the Wise only are admitted, the uninitiated never being consulted in political or social matters. The Wise often retire into hermitages, whereby they acquire great honour and influence. Heckethorn puts the number of Druses as not exceeding fifty or sixty thousand occupying in the Lebanon upwards of forty large towns and villages, and nearly two hundred and thirty villages with a mixed population of Druses and Christians, whilst in the Anti-Lebanon they are also possessed of nearly eighty exclusively Druse villages.

CHAPTER XXI

THE RELIGION OF THE DRUSES

"BEFORE we enter on an exposition of the religion of the Druses," says Dr. Wortabet,[1] who is a standard authority on the Druses, from his many years' residence as a missionary of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland in their district, "we shall premise a few remarks on the source from which it is derived. And we think there can be no hesitation as to the real origin of the tenets which were collected and incorporated by Hamzeh into his religion, because the authority of history in this matter is both explicit and unmistakable. About two centuries after the rise of Mohammedanism, several sects flourished in Persia and on the eastern confines of Irak, under the general name of Batenites, or Mystics. This name is derived partly from the recondite nature of their creed, which, on the principle of allegorization, raised from old and existing religions a new fabric different from them all, and partly, perhaps, from their outward profession of the prevailing and dominate religion of Islam in the East. Among them the Karmathians, by their sword, won the highest degree of celebrity and eminence of position. After subduing all Arabia, Syria and Irak, and threatening to capture the royal city of the successors of Mohammed, they were defeated by the Abbassides, and their religion and position reduced to their original narrow limits, but not, however, until their principles had been diffused throughout the extensive tract of country which they had overrun with their sword. The other kindred sects were supported by feeble numbers, and their

[1] Wortabet, *Researches into the Religions of Syria*, pp. 297 ff. London, 1860.

influence out of their own communion could not have been much. It was from the doctrines of these sects that both El Dorazi and Hamzeh took the religion of the Druses. Both were Persians, and, according to the testimony of historians, learned Batenite doctors. But in arriving at this conclusion the greatest satisfaction may perhaps be obtained by comparing the Druse with the Batenite doctrines, observing the close resemblance between them, and in some cases the complete identity, and tracing the relation of the one to the other, as we trace a developed theory to the primary idea or ideas which gave rise to it."

But the religion of the Druses can be traced to a still more remote source. For the Batenites have evidently borrowed many of their doctrines from the philosophers of ancient times, especially the Persian, as improved by Zoroaster—systems, which were so prevalent before the Christian era, which subsequently to it misled some of the Christian doctors, and tainted or gave rise to many of the heresies of the Christian religion, and which continued to exercise their fascination on some of the philosophers who professed Mohammedanism.

Six volumes, containing one hundred and eleven treatises or epistles, form the sacred books of the Druses, each volume taking its name from the title of the first treatise. They were written by Hamzeh and his coadjutors, the other four ministers, in which they attempt to imitate the style of the Koran ; but the performance ranks far inferior to the rich eloquence, forcible expression, and classic Arabic in which Mohammed composed his book. It is said that a seventh volume was presented to them by a native Christian traveller, who found it in one of the libraries of Egypt, and for which they evinced much gratitude ; but no one, apparently, has ever seen the book, though the statement is probably quite true. These books contain a discussion of their doctrines, controversial treatises, and epistles to particular persons. To these have been added, in later times, other books written by some of their learned men, in explanation of their creed, on the morality enjoined by their religion, and on their future hopes and expectations ; but they are held in a much lower estimation as to authority and respect,

than the six books. None are allowed the privilege of possessing or reading them but such as have been inducted into the mysteries of their religion, and who form that class among them known by the name of Akkal, or initiated.

If a stranger asks for admission to a Thursday meeting he will never be refused. Only if he is a Christian, the Akkal will open a *Bible* and read from it ; and if a Mohammedan, he will hear a few chapters of the *Koran*, and the ceremony will end with this. They will wait until he is gone, and then shutting fast the doors of their convent, take to their own rites and books, passing for this purpose into their subterranean sanctuaries. " The Druses remain, even more than the Jews, a peculiar people," says Colonel Churchill, one of the few fair and strictly impartial writers. " They marry within their own race ; they are rarely if ever converted ; they adhere tenaciously to their traditions, and they baffle all efforts to discover their cherished secrets. . . . The bad name of that Caliph whom they claim as their founder is fairly compensated for by the pure lives of many whom they honour as saints, and by the heroism of their feudal leaders."

As to the uninitiated, they are never allowed to even see the sacred writings, and none of them have the remotest idea where these are kept. There are missionaries in Syria, who boast of having in their possession a few copies. The volumes alleged to be the correct expositions from these secret books (such as the translation by Petis de la Crixo, in 1701, from the works presented by Nasr-Allah to the King of France), are nothing more than a compilation of " secrets," known, more or less, to every inhabitant of the southern ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Libanus. They were the work of an apostate Dervish, who was expelled from the sect Hanafi, for improper conduct—the embezzlement of the money of widows and orphans. The *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, in two volumes, by Sylvestre de Sacy (1828) is another network of hypotheses. A copy of this work was to be found, in 1870, on the window-sill of one of their principal Khalwehs, or places of religious meeting. To the inquisitive question of an English traveller, as to their rites, an Akkal, a venerable old man, who spoke English

as well as French, opened the volume of de Sacy, and, offering it to his interlocutor, remarked, with a benevolent smile; "Read this instructive and truthful book; I could explain to you neither better nor more correctly the secrets of God and our Blessed Hamzeh, than it does." The traveller understood the hint.

Mackenzie says they settled at Lebanon about the tenth century, and "seem to be a mixture of Kurds, Marid-Arabs, and other semi-civilized tribes. Their religion is compounded of Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. They have a regular Order of priesthood and a *kind of hierarchy* . . . there is a regular system of passwords and signs. . . . Twelve months' probation, to which either sex is admitted, preceded initiation."

Madame Blavatsky, in quoting the above, says it shows "how little even persons as trustworthy as Mr. Mackenzie really know of these mystics."

"Mosheim, who knows as much, or we should rather say as little, as any others, is entitled to the merit of candidly admitting that 'their religion is peculiar to themselves, and is involved in some mystery.' We should say it was—rather!

"That their religion exhibits traces of Magianism and Gnosticism is natural, as the whole of the Ophite esoteric philosophy is at the bottom of it. But the characteristic dogma of the Druses is the absolute unity of God. He is the essence of life, and, although incomprehensible and invisible, is to be known through *occasional manifestations in human form.* Like the Hindus, they hold that He was incarnated more than once on earth. Hamzeh was the *precursor* of the last manifestation to be (the tenth *avatar*), not the inheritor of Hakem, who is yet to come. Hamzeh was the personification of the 'Universal Wisdom.' Bohaeddin in his writings calls him Messiah. The whole number of his disciples, or those who at different ages of the world have imparted wisdom to mankind, which the latter as invariably have forgotten and rejected in course of time, is one hundred and sixty-four (164, the Kabalistic s.d.k). Therefore, their stages or degrees of promotion after initiation are five; the first three degrees are typified by the 'three

feet of the candlestick of the inner Sanctuary, which holds the light of the *five* elements;' the last two degrees, the most important and terrifying in their solemn grandeur, belonging to the highest Orders; and the whole five degrees emblematically represent the said five mystic Elements. The 'three feet are the holy *Application*, the *Opening*, and the *Phantom*,' says one of their books, on man's inner and outer soul, and his body; a phantom, a passing shadow. The body, or matter, is also called the 'Rival,' for 'he is the minister of sin, the Devil ever creating dissentions between the Heavenly Intelligence (spirit) and the soul, which he tempts incessantly.' Their ideas on transmigration are Pythagorean and Kabalistic. The spirit, or Temeami (the divine soul), was in Elijah and John the Baptist; and the soul of Jesus was that of Hamzeh; that is to say, of the same degree of purity and sanctity. Until their resurrection, by which they understand the day when the spiritual bodies of men will be absorbed into GOD's own essence and being (the Nirvana of the Hindus), the souls of men will keep their astral forms, except the few chosen ones who, from the moment of their separation from their bodies, begin to exist as pure spirits. The life of man they divide into soul, body, and intelligence, or mind. It is the latter which imparts and communicates to the soul the divine spark from its Hamzeh (Christos)."

The fundamental parts of the Druse religion may therefore be thus summed up: (1) The Knowledge of GOD, especially with regard to His manifestations in human form. (2) The Knowledge of the Universal Mind, the highest and noblest creating intelligence, yet the servant and slave of GOD. His name in the time of Jesus was Lazarus: in the time of Mohammed, Salman al-Farisee: in the time of El Hakim, Hamzeh. (3) The Knowledge of the other four Spiritual Ministers—the Universal Soul; the Word, or the Ambassador of Power; The Preceder, or the Right Wing; the Succeeder, or the Left Wing. These took the human forms of Ismael, Mohammed, Salman and Ali. (5) The Knowledge of the Seven Ethical Commandments, as introduced by Hamzeh—Veracity; Love of the Brethren; Forsaking the Worship of Idols; Repudiation of Devils and

Delusions; Acknowledging the Unity of God at all times; Consent to the Actions of God (or, as stated by some writers, Secrecy in Religion, which is probably more correct); Implicit resignation to the Will of God.

The Druses believe that though some degree of rewards and punishments is distributed to men, first during their lives, and then in the various fortunes or misfortunes which meet the soul in its transmigrations, yet the good and the wicked will not receive their just measure of desert until the last Judgment-day, or the Resurrection. By these terms, however, the Druses do not understand a real resurrection of the bodies which have long mouldered in death, an actual judgment scene, and another world in which the soul and body shall live through all eternity. They simply mean by these expressions that a universal and just system of rewards and punishments will be observed in a particular stage in the history of the world, which may be conveniently called the judgment-day, metaphorically the end, or mystically the Resurrection.

"In any account of the Druses," says Wortabet,[1] "that which claims the first consideration is the complete secrecy in which they have kept their religion for a period over eight hundred years. Nothing but the actual plunder of their houses and places of religious meetings has brought their sacred books to light. For this watchful solicitude we have a sufficient reason in the view which is held in their books of all other religions and of their founders. Had the general body of the Mohammedans known that their venerable Prophet was regarded by this people as an incarnation of the Evil One, who had first transmigrated through the bodies of Noah, Moses, and Jesus, who they revere as the apostles of God, they would certainly, in the time of their bygone power, have exterminated the Druses from the face of the earth, and they would even now, if they knew all, bear eternal hatred against them. It required, therefore, but little sagacity to show the Druses their real interest, and to indicate their wisest policy in this matter; and so far from impugning the religions of others, they have actually assumed outwardly the Mohammedan religion,

[1] *Researches into the Religions of Syria*, pp. 327 ff.

and under this cover have effectually succeeded in deceiving men as to what they really believed for nearly nine hundred years. This outward profession, however, does not criminate them in the least before Him whom they believe to be God; but it is rather a precept of their religion."

It is, perhaps, with this object in view that they have divided themselves into the two well-known classes—Akkal (the Initiated) and *Juhhal* (the Uninitiated). By the former is designated that class of persons who are admitted into the secrets of religion, and indoctrinated in its mystical meanings. The Uninitiated are excluded both from the knowledge of religion, and the meetings which are consecrated to its service. No other present advantages are either gained or lost by belonging to the first or second class; but thus another effectual precaution is adopted to keep the world in ignorance of their belief. On this subject Hamzeh says: "Keep away wisdom (religion) from those who are not worthy of it; but take care not to exclude those who deserve it. For he who keeps it away from the worthy defiles his faith and religion; and he who delivers it to the unworthy corrupts his confidence in the truth. Take heed, then, that ye do not deliver it to those who are unworthy of it, and see that ye are concealed in the prevailing religion." [1]

When a Druse desires to be initiated into his religion, he is required to bind himself solemnly by the following covenant: "I,——, the son of ——, in sound reason, and with my full consent and preference, do now absolve myself from all sects and religions which contradict the religion of our Lord El Hakem of infinite power; and do acknowledge that there is no adored God in heaven, or existing Lord on earth, except our Lord El Hakem (may his name be praised!) I do give up myself, soul and body, unto him; and undertake to submit to all his orders, and to know nothing but the obedience of our Lord, who appeared in Egypt in the human form. I shall render the homage due to him to none else, whether past, present, or expected. I submit to whatever he sees fit to decree respecting me. I shall keep the secrets of my religion and speak of them

[1] The Epistle on Warning and Exhortation.

to none but Unitarians. If I ever forsake the religion of our Lord, or disobey any of his commands, may I be absolved from the adored Creator, and cut off from the privileges of the ministers; and I shall justly deserve immediate punishment." This rite of induction is performed by the Akkal, when they simply put the books of Wisdom into his hands.

The Akkal are also divided into two classes—the simply initiated and those who have entirely devoted themselves to the interests and duties of religion, and who aspire to a higher degree of sanctity. The latter are distinguished by the additional title of Iwayid, though this distinction is not always observed. The simply initiated are required to abstain in their dress from gaudy colours and fashions, and in conversation from swearing and obscene language. Their deportment should always be grave and dignified; and they are in no wise to drink spirituous liquors, or even to smoke. They are forbidden to eat or drink in the houses of governors, or in any place where they have reason to suppose that such articles are bought with money, extorted or otherwise unrighteously got.

The Iwayid aspire to a much higher degree of outward sanctity. Their dress is peculiar, and made of the simplest materials, in the simplest and most primitive fashion. The turban and coat, however, are their particular badge—the former being made of a narrow slip of white cloth wound round a cap of red cloth in a peculiar spherical manner; and the coat is made of homespun wool, streaked with broad stripes of white and black. The most distinguished among them assume an air of profound humility; and as they accustom themselves with this object in view, to a downcast attitude of the head, this forced position becomes eventually natural to them. In conversation they never use a bad word or oath, or even a word which the most fastidious taste of the country does not pronounce to be perfectly proper. They are very scrupulous in using choice expressions, which shall convey neither more nor less than the truth. No extravagant or even hyperbolical language ever escapes from their lips without due qualification. Suppose one of this class desired to say that he had eaten

a loaf of bread when he had eaten one-half or three-quarters, he would express himself in this way, " I have eaten a whole loaf—a part of it." In this way, hyperbole and other figures of speech being very common in every language—especially in the Oriental style—they are under the necessity of retrenching or qualifying very much of what they say. This gives them a hesitation in their speech, and a sanctimoniousness in their demeanour, which are very annoying, and sometimes very disgusting. They never engage in trade, as such, for a means of livelihood; but always have more or less of landed property, which they cultivate, and from which they derive their living. The money which they get in exchange for their goods, when they have reason to apprehend it was obtained in some improper way, they always exchange with some Christian or Jew.

The general conduct of the higher grade of Akkal is good. They are almost always very temperate and abstemious, and in their morals are generally very correct. In their manners, they are dignified; and in their social habits, kind, respectful, and hospitable. During disease and other afflictions, they generally manfully bear pain and sorrow, attribute all to the inscrutable wisdom and goodness of the Almighty, and wear a calm air of perfect resignation. As a work of penance, some of them deny themselves the luxury of eating fresh meat and fruits, or sleeping on a bed, through life.

But we must not forget that such acts of piety are real only when brother believers are benefited by them; to others a system of deception and hypocrisy, which is called El Zahir (outward appearance), is carried on with consummate skill. Nor does their religion recognize any acts of mercy, or charity, or neighbourly love, to be acceptable before God, except so far as they may serve to establish a good reputation for themselves and their religion. For this however, we have only collateral proofs, such as intimations in their sacred books to that effect; their habitual practice, which, in spite of all their powers of deception, often exposes their principles; and the great system of duplicity which is taught in their books, and which governs all their intercourse with others.

This is perhaps the worst feature of the religion of the Druses. The system of dissimulation which they act out *on principle* most justly class them with the most deceptive and fraudulent people in existence. The person who praises your religion, tells you that he is a firm believer in its doctrines, and will even submit to take its peculiar rites on him, when every word he utters is false, and when his religion completely absolves him from every culpability in this nefarious fraud, can never claim or deserve any degree of confidence in his honesty or integrity. Nor can you ever tell whether your smooth-tongued friend, who is lavish in his expressions of affection and attachment, may not all the while be meditating your injury.

CHAPTER XXII

RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES OF THE DRUSES

The place where the Druses meet for exercising the worship of their religion is called a *Khalweh*, which means a place where secret meetings are held. It is very simple, and sometimes rude in its structure, and contains a few mats for the worshippers to sit on, some of their sacred books, and sometimes eatables and bedding for the accommodation of strange Druses who stop there over a night. They meet only once a week, on Thursday evenings, which, according to the Eastern mode of computing time, is reckoned as Friday evening. The injunctions of Hamzeh on this point are these: "Unitarians! our Lord has disappeared and left his covenant with me. He disappeared on Friday evening, and on such a night will he appear again to subdue the world. It is therefore your duty to meet on every Friday evening, and read the books of wisdom which our Lord has left with you. Study them, and be careful of them. You should, moreover, instruct your sisters in the faith, but let them be secluded from you by a partition, and let them not lift up their voices." It is evident, therefore, that their worship consists principally on the perusal and explanation of their sacred books. We understand that they are always chanted, not read; and this is generally done by the best singer in the audience. Towards the close of the meeting they sing some epic poems written by their poets, whose subject is a glowing description of the invasion and subjugation of the world by the Eastern army under the command of the five ministers, whose appearance is now almost daily anticipated by them. Prayer, as such, they have not; though they have some forms which they use in private at option. The following is one of them: "Praise to Thee, O Thou whose grace is invisible! Praise to Thee, O Thou who has the best names! Praise to Thee, O Thou

whose greatness is inimitable ! I pray Thee, O God, the most generous of hearers, through the five (ministers) and the three (ministers) who submitted themselves to Thee, to grant me purity of heart, prayer in my tongue, pardon in my end, a sufficiency of righteous provision, and a translation to a pure and holy tabernacle—not to the tabernacle of a wretched infidel. I pray not for a reversal of Thy decrees, but that grace may accompany them. O Thou whose commands none can put away, and whose decrees none can frustrate, Thou art the high, and Thou the great ! "

These meetings, however, are not devoted exclusively to religious purposes ; for the Druses regard politics as an important part of the interests and services of religion. Accordingly, in these assemblies, after the usual course of their religious worship, the women and the general body of Akkal, who have been inducted only into the first principles and secrets of the Druse religion, retire, and leave the place to the elder and higher grade of the initiated. The object of this ulterior meeting is purely political ; every item of information in reference to politics, gained by any member, is laid before the whole ; and every step to be taken is discussed. In order to provide, among the Druse community, for a universal union of sentiment and action, two or three distinguished places, which have constant communication between them, take the lead by general consent.[1]

Like every secret association, they have a general sign by which they recognize each other. That which they have heretofore adopted is that the one party ask the other whether the farmers in his country sow the seed of the mysobalanus. The proper answer is that they sow it in the hearts of believers. To ensure recognition, other questions are then asked about the ministers, their names, titles and offices. These being properly answered, the stranger is admitted to the privileges of the fraternity. It was, we believe, the celebrated traveller Burkhardt that was once asked about the seed. He did not know the object of the question, and he relates the incident with much *naïveté*. The Rev. Dr. Eli Smith was once asked

[1] Baaklin in Lebanon, near Deir el Kamar, and El Bayada in the Hermon, near Hasbeiya, are the two places which hold the first rank of eminence among others of their kind.

the same question, while travelling in the Hauran, and though he knew the proper answer, he very wisely, and to the great peace of his mind, evaded it. They were evidently supposed to be foreign Druses, who had outwardly adopted Christianity, as they themselves had Mohammedanism.

In refuting the licentious doctrines of the Nusairis, Hamzeh takes occasion to enforce the duty of chastity. "The animal appetites," he says, in speaking of physical love, "are produced by the concurrence of the four elements which exist in all animals; and whoever prefers them to his religion is below the beasts, and even more lost in their ways He, on the contrary, who abstains from the indulgence of his brutal passions, is more excellent than the exalted angels."

The Christians of the Lebanon are not loth to affix to the Druses a character for looseness of morals, which, in reality, they by no means deserve. This tendency to depreciate them may, indeed, be founded upon traditional accounts of the conduct of those sectarians, who so justly merited the censures of Hamzeh and Moktana. And as the Druses have always carefully, and, until lately, successfully concealed their religion, it is not surprising that the Christians fell into the error of supposing, that so much caution and dissimulation were intended to cover practices which would not bear the light of day.

The duty of submission to legitimate authority, so peremptorily laid down in the Koran, which the disciples of the exterior law interpret into submission to Abu-Bekr, Omar, Othman, the family of Omeyah, and that of Abbas, and which the Schiites make to imply submission to Ali, son of Abu-Talib and his issue, is also declared to be vain and nugatory.

"When we consider," says Boha-edden, "the belief of all those who profess the worship of one God, we recognize that men are divided on this point into three classes. The first seek him with the eyes, and by the testimony of corporeal view; the second strive to know him by the aid of words, logic, and sophistry; the last class, avoiding all that, confess his Unity by the Intelligence." "Men," says Temeami, "are divided into three classes. Some profess the exterior law, they are called Musselmen. Some profess the interior

law, they are called Believers. The last are attached to the Kaim Alzeman, they are named Unitarians.

"Whoever professes himself to be a Unitarian, and pays any attention whatever to the exterior law, is a liar and a deceiver; and whoever pays any regard to the interior law, and at the same time calls himself a Unitarian, is guilty of treachery and falsehood. He is a polytheist, inasmuch as he associates anything with our Lord."

It is thus that Hamzeh and his coadjutors, by a successive series of mystical explanations and anathemas, sweep away Mohammedanism in all its phases. Yet many of the Druse Sheiks, who are Akkals, may be seen carrying very neat pocket editions of the Koran, enveloped in rich gilt cases, suspended from their girdles!

"The Unitarians,[1] as has appeared from numerous passages, are called brethren and sisters, in the writings of Hamzeh and the ministers. It is this quality of brotherhood, which supposes brotherly love, that Hamzeh constitutes as the basis of his injunctions of mutual assistance."

It is this principle, notwithstanding some deviations caused at times by external and political reasons, which has been the mainstay of the Druses, and gives them that attitude of strength and compactness in presence of a Mohammedan and Christian population, the first secretly, the latter openly inimical to them; and which has enabled them, in spite of reverses, to hold their ground and maintain even an aspect of superiority and independence.

Hamzeh tells them to watch reciprocally over each other's safety, and enjoins them never to go unarmed and without having at least a cutlass. He gives even a further development of this precept: "I recommend you to watch over the safety of the brethren, for by this your faith will be perfected; administer to their necessities, satisfy their demands (whether in matters of religion or in temporal concerns), receive their excuses when they excuse themselves to you, look upon those who deceive them as your enemies, visit those of them who are sick, do good to the poor among you, and relieve them, not holding short your hand."

[1] Churchill, *Mount Lebanon*, vol. ii. pp. 228 ff.

Boha-edden, in like manner, in a letter addressed to the "Inhabitants of Mount Lebanon, Antioch, Syria, and Mesopotamia," dated 17th year of Hamzeh, 425 Hegira, lays down this principle: "It is expressly forbidden for any man who is distinguished by the profession of Unitarianism, and whose belief is consequently entirely different from that of the sectarians of heresy and incredulity, to exact any contribution from his brother, if he has wherewithal to support himself; and it is equally forbidden for a faithful Unitarian, when he knows that his brother is in want, to reduce him to the necessity of seeking relief elsewhere."

The spirit of independence and self-respect on the one hand, and of mutual support which proudly scorns external aid on the other, here inculcated, needs no comment. These feelings have become inherent in the Druse character. No one has ever seen a Druse begging.

"The cautious advances made by the apostles of the new sect," says Colonel Churchill, "based upon principles of proselytism long dominant in the East, offered nothing offensive to the religious prejudices (if such existed), of those to whom they appealed. They appeared with the Koran in hand, and professed to have the key to its mystical import. But it was only after the mind had been irresistibly engaged in the process of thought, that the abstruse and subversive doctrines of Hamzeh were fully presented and developed. A religion which required no outward rites and ceremonies, while it pretended to elevate the heart into spiritual communion with superior spirits of the highest and most exalted nature, was well calculated to make an impression upon, and so become popular, amongst a race whose position and habits kept them aloof from any permanent contact with the fanatical adherents of the Prophets. The singular and unprecedented licence likewise which Hamzeh granted to his followers, even upon religious principle, of continuing to profess outwardly the creed of the ruling power, while they inwardly embraced the dogmas which he had laid down, must have tended considerably to pave the way to their adoption, by soothing down all those fears and apprehensions which might naturally have suggested themselves to the new

[1] *Mount Lebanon*, ii. pp. 269 ff. 2 vols., London, 1853.

converts, had they been called upon to make an open profession of their adopted belief.

"When a Druse enters the mosque, none is more fervent in his devotions, or more exact in his genuflexions; and should it be clear to him that it was his interest to profess Christianity, he would offer not the slightest objection to baptism, or even immersion. Indeed, at the period when Ibrahim Pasha pressed his levies so severely amongst the Druses, numbers of them, to escape the conscription, demanded admission and were received into the bosom of the Catholic Church, were baptized by the Bishop, and became very expert in making the sign of the Cross. It is needless to state that, when the conscription was over, the Church had to deplore the loss of its proselytes. Another principle of security which distinguishes the Druse religion is, as has been already shown, that all attempts at proselytism are strictly forbidden, nay, more than that, no converts are accepted. Thus the pliancy which makes the Druses ready to profess the religion dominant in the country where they live, whatever that religion may be; the self-satisfied pride which makes them scorn all attempts at increasing their numbers by proselytism; and the inviolable secrecy which they maintain as to their real religion; these three principles, it may be broadly asserted, have enabled them to maintain an almost undisturbed existence for upwards of eight centuries."

So far as is known, only one Western initiate has ever been received into full brotherhood with the Druses. This was the late Professor A. L. Rawson, of New York, a well-known artist and traveller, who passed many years in the East, four times visiting Palestine. Under a misapprehension, apparently, that Madam Blavatsky had also been received into this mysterious sect, he wrote to her an account of his initiation ceremony in which fuller details are given than have before been made public. The following is the letter, as given in *Isis Unveiled*, vol. ii, pp. 313, 314:—

34, Bond Street, New York.
June 6, 1877.

". . . . Your note, asking me to give you an account of my initiation into a secret Order among the people commonly

known as Druses, in Mount Lebanon, was received this morning. I took, as you are fully aware, an obligation at that time to conceal within my own memory the greater part of the 'mysteries' with the most interesting parts of the 'instructions'; so that what is left may not be of any service to the public. Such information as I can rightfully give, you are welcome to have and use as you may have occasion.

"The probation in my case was, by *special dispensation*, made one month, during which time I was 'shadowed' by a priest, who served as my cook, guide, interpreter, and general servant, that he might be able to testify to the fact of my having strictly conformed to the rules in diet, ablutions and other matters. He was also my instructor in the text of the ritual, which we recited from time to time for practice, in dialogue or in song, as it may have been. Whenever we happened to be near a Druse village, on a Thursday, we attended the 'open' meetings, where men and women assembled for instruction and worship, and to expose to the world generally their religious practices. I was never present at a 'Friday close' meeting before my initiation, nor do I believe anyone else, man or woman, ever was, except by collusion with a priest, and that is not probable, for a false priest forfeits his life. The practical jokers among them sometimes 'fool' a too curious 'Frank' by a sham initiation, especially if such a one is suspected of having some connection with the missionaries at Beirut or elsewhere.

"The initiates include both men and women, and the ceremonies are of so peculiar a nature that both sexes are required to assist in the ritual and 'work.' The 'furniture' of the 'prayer-house' and of the 'vision-chamber' is simple, and except for convenience may consist of but a strip of carpet. In the 'Gray Hall" (the place is never named, and is underground, *not far* from Bayt-el-Deen) there are some rich decorations and valuable pieces of ancient furniture, the work of Arab silversmiths five or six centuries ago, inscribed and dated. The day of initiation must be a continual fast—from daylight to sunset in winter, or six o'clock in summer, and the ceremony is from beginning to end a series of trials and temptations, calculated to test the endurance of the

candidate under physical and mental pressure. It is seldom that any but the young man or woman succeeds in 'winning' all the prizes, since *Nature will sometimes exert itself* in spite of the most stubborn will, and the neophyte fail of passing some of the tests. In such a case the probation is extended another year, when another trial is held.

"Among other tests of the neophyte's self-control are the following: choice pieces of cooked meat, savoury soup, pilau, and other appetizing dishes, with sherbet, coffee, wine and water, are set, as if accidentally, in his way, and he is left alone for a time with the tempting things. To a hungry and fainting soul the trial is severe. But a more difficult ordeal is when the seven priestesses retire, all but one, the youngest and prettiest, and the door is closed and barred on the outside, after warning the candidate that he will be left to his 'reflections' for half an hour. Wearied by the long-continued ceremonial, weak with hunger, parched with thirst, and a sweet reaction coming after the tremendous strain to keep his animal nature in subjection, this moment of privacy and of temptation is brimful of peril. The beautiful young vestal, timidly approaching and with glances which lend a double magnetic allurement to her words, begs him in low tones to 'bless her.' Woe to him if he does! A hundred eyes see him from secret peep-holes, and only to the ignorant neophyte is there the appearance of concealment and opportunity.

"There is no infidelity, idolatry, or other really bad feature in the system. They have the relics of what was once a grand form of Nature worship, which has been contracted under a despotism into a secret Order, hidden from the light of day, and exposed only in the smoky glare of a few burning lamps, in some damp cave or chapel underground. The chief tenets of their religious teachings are comprised in seven 'tablets,' which are these, to state them in general terms:

"1. The Unity of God, or the infinite oneness of deity.

"2. The essential excellence of truth.

"3. The law of toleration as to all men and women in opinion.

" 4. Respect for all men and women as to character and conduct.

" 5. Entire submission to God's decrees as to fate.

" 6. Chastity of body and mind and soul.

" 7. Mutual help under all conditions.

" These tenets are not printed or written. Another set is printed or written to mislead the unwary, but with these we are not concerned.

" The chief results of the initiation seemed to be a kind of mental illusion or sleep-waking, in which the neophyte saw, or thought he saw, the images of people who were known to be absent, and in some cases thousands of miles away. I thought (or perhaps it was my mind at work) I saw friends and relatives that I knew at the time were in New York State, while I was then in Lebanon. How these results were produced I cannot say. They appeared in a dark room, when the ' guide ' was talking, the ' company ' singing in the ' chamber,' and near the close of the day, when I was tired out with fasting, walking, talking, singing, robing, unrobing, seeing a great many people in various conditions as to dress and undress, and with great mental strain in resisting certain physical manifestations that result from the appetites when they overcome the will, and in paying close attention to the passing scenes, hoping to remember them—so that I may have been unfit to judge of any new and surprising phenomena, and more especially of those apparently magical appearances which have always excited my suspicion and distrust. I know the various uses of the magic-lantern, and other apparatus, and took care to examine the room when the ' visions ' appeared to me the same evening, and the next day, and several times afterwards, and knew that, in my case, there was no use made of any machinery or other means besides the voice of the ' guide and instructor.' On several occasions afterward, when at a great distance from the ' chamber,' the same or similar visions were produced, as, for instance, in Hornstein's Hotel at Jerusalem. A daughter-in-law of a well-known Jewish merchant is an initiated ' sister ' and can produce the visions almost at will on anyone who will live strictly according to the rules of

the Order for a few weeks, more or less, according to their nature, as gross or refined, etc.

" I am quite safe in saying that the initiation is so peculiar that it could not be printed so as to instruct one who had not been ' worked ' through the ' chamber.' So it would be even more impossible to make an *exposé* of them than of the Freemasons. The real secrets are acted and not spoken, and require several initiated persons to assist in the work.

" It is not necessary for me to say how some of the notions of that people seem to perpetuate certain beliefs of the ancient Greeks—as, for instance, the idea that a man has two souls, and many others—for you probably were made familiar with them in your passage through the ' upper ' and ' lower ' chamber. If I am mistaken in supposing you an ' initiate,' please excuse me. I am aware that the closest friends often conceal that ' sacred secret ' from each other; and even husband and wife may live—as I was informed in Dayr-el-Kamar was the fact in one family there—for twenty years together and yet neither knew anything of the initiation of the other. You, undoubtedly, have good reasons for keeping your own counsel.

" Yours truly,

" A. L. Rawson."

CHAPTER XXIII

RELIGIOUS CREED OF THE DRUSES

This interesting and extraordinary creed, which has been very carefully translated by Mr. G. W. Chasseaud, is included in his book, *The Druses of the Lebanon*, published in London in 1855. It is from an Arabic manuscript which he obtained in 1851, with a great deal of trouble, from a Maronite gentleman, residing in the village of Hadded, on the Lebanon, who was then engaged in initiating him into the mysteries of the Arabic language. I have preferred to give it here in full, rather than, like others, content myself with a series of too often unconnected extracts.

Section I

A Short Explanation of the Ocean of Time

The Creator, the Supreme, created all things.

The first thing He created was the minister "Universal Mind" (the praises of God be upon him!), and the Creator gave to "Mind" the power to create, classify and arrange all things.

The Spirit "Mind" has the following attributes: "The Virgin of Power," "The Receiver of Revelation," "The Knower of the Wishes, *or Desires*," "The Explainer of Commands," "The Spring of Light," "The Will of Production," "The Chosen of the Creator," and so forth.

In was this spirit, "Mind," known by the above attributes, that arranged the world.

The "Mind" is the Pen which writes upon stone, and the stone which it writes upon is "The Soul."

The "Mind" is a perfect being, which being is at liberty to act, and is possessed of a free will; all he ordains or creates is in accordance with the will of the Creator.

When the Creator created " Mind," He made him possessed of a free will, and with power to separate, or to remain and dwell with the Creator.

Ultimately " Mind " rebelled and abandoned the Creator, and thus became the spirit of sin, which sin was predestined to create the devil.

And the existence or creation of the devil occasioned the creation of another spirit called " Universal Soul," and this spirit was the cause of the creation of all things existing.

The devil is perfect sin, and the creation of this spirit was permitted by the Creator, to show the unlimited power of the Creator in creating an opposite spirit to God.

Now when " Mind " rebelled against the Creator, the Creator threw him out of heaven ; but " Mind " knew that this was done by the Creator to test his faith, and to punish him for his sin ; so he repented and asked for forgiveness, and implored help against the devil.

And the Creator pitied " Mind," and created him a helpmate called " Universal Soul " ; this spirit God created from the spirits of knowledge of good and evil.

Then " Mind " told " Soul " to yield obedience to the Creator, and " Soul " yielded, and became a helpmate to " Mind " ; and these two spirits tried to force into submission to the Creator the evil spirit or devil.

They came to the evil one, " Mind " from behind, and " Soul " from before, in this fashion to marshal the devil into the presence of the Creator ; but the devil evaded them, being unguarded on either side, which enabled him to escape from them to the right and left.

The " Mind " and " Soul," finding this to be the case, required each of them a helpmate : " Mind " required a helpmate to keep the evil one from the right side, " Soul " one to guard him on the left, so as to hem in the devil between them, and prevent his escape on any side.

So they moved and immediately two spirits were created ; the one called " Word " and the other " the Preceding."

The devil now found himself hemmed in on all four sides, and felt the want of a spirit to help him ; and as to all things there must be an opposite, the Creator knowing the thoughts of the devil, inspired " Mind," and thus created him a

supporter; and when this supporter was created it was against the wishes of "Soul."

The "Mind" and "Soul" commanded this supporter to yield to the Creator, and he yielded and worshipped the Creator.

And the Creator commanded the supporter to yield to "Mind" and "Soul"; but being instigated by the devil and tempted to disobedience, this supporter refused submission to "Mind" and "Soul," whereupon being cast out of heaven, he clung to the devil.

Then the Creator inspired "Mind," and "Mind" inspired "Soul," and created the "Word" (as already said).

And the "Word" could do good or evil.

And the "Mind" and "Soul" told "Word" to yield to the Creator, and the "Word" yielded; and the four spirits, "Mind," "Devil," "Soul," and the supporter, having inspired "Word," created "Preceding"; who had good and evil in him, but more of the former than the latter; so that "Preceding" yielded ready obedience to the Creator, and was also subservient to "Mind" and "Soul."

Now all these spirits above enumerated inspired "Preceding," and thus created "Ultimum," the last spirit created, and he yielded to the Creator.

And the Creator commanded "Ultimum" to be subservient to "Mind," "Soul," "Word," and "Preceding," and "Ultimum" was subservient.

Now all these spirits were true spirits before they entered the modern world, and their generation is as follows: The Creator created "Mind," and "Mind" created "Soul," and "Soul" created "Word," and "Word" created "Preceding," and "Preceding" created "Ultimum," and "Ultimum" created the heavens and the earth and all therein.

And it came to pass that the aforesaid five spirits came to the devil, "Mind" from behind, "Soul" from before, "Word" from the left, and "Preceding" and "Ultimum" from the right, in order to force him to yield submission to the Creator; but the devil refused submission, and finding himself confined on all sides, with no means of issue except upwards and downwards, and as, moreover, he feared fleeing

upwards, where he must needs encounter the Creator, the devil fled downwards, *or sunk into the earth ;* and this was the origin of hell.

Section 2

When the world was created it was at the will of the Creator who called it " The World of Souls," and these souls are masculine or feminine.

All the spirits created were created from, *or out of,* " Mind."

The origin, *or root,* of these spirits is the Creator ; next to him ranks " Mind," then " Soul," and so on in regular succession, as they were created, down to " Ultimum."

The souls that have been created in the world, *that is Mankind,* were numbered from the beginning, and have never diminished or increased, and will remain so for all eternity.

Each soul is perfect in itself, possessing all the senses, such as hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, smelling, and touching, and possessing all the attributes and senses which originated by the regular successive creation of the first seven spirits ; and each spirit created possessed, in addition to its own peculiar gifts, the capacity and senses of the others.

All the souls that were created in the world possessed the knowledge of all things except of their Creator, for which cause the Creator placed them in separate bodies (*earthly tabernacles*), and by this means they obtained knowledge of their Creator.

All the stars, suns, moons, which are *in sight* of the earth were created for the use and good of these souls.

The bodies, or *encasements,* of these souls are all corruptible, but the souls themselves are incorruptible and unchangeable, shifting from one man or beast to another, and never differing from what they were and continue to be.

Section 3

Whatever exists that is in possession of the senses of hearing, seeing, feeling, was created from *or made out of* the seven original spirits, and gained by them the additional sensation of heat and cold.

Heat was masculine ; cold, feminine ; and by the marriage of these two was produced solidity. Again, they produced a second offspring called mildness.

When these four were created, then the world, Chaos, received a body and the Image.

By Image, is signified length, breadth, height, and depth.

This Chaos is round ; and the further star, called Atlas, was created by him.

Then Chaos came to the orbits of the constellation, and immediately were created the twelve signs of the Zodiac ; some fixed, others in perpetual motion.

The Chaos created Zahil, and, from thence, from one orbit to the other till the seven planets were made ; and none of them travel on the same orbit, but each has a different orbit.

All this was done by Chaos—by the help of the seven original spirits, who in their turn derived aid from the Creator.

The names and the order of the orbits that are furthest from the sun are as follows : (1) Huilah ; (2) Atlas ; (3) Abrage ; (4) Zahil ; and so on, to the last orbit nearest the sun.

The names of the seven planets are Zahil, Mushtari, Marrih, Shams, Zahrat, Aatarid, and Kamar.

These seven arranged the interior economy of the earth, and all that happens to the animal or vegetable and mineral creation is through the agency of these seven stars, or *planets ;* fortune and misfortune are ruled by them.

All the aforesaid planets combined, *or moved,* and heat fell downwards to a medium spot, and there forming a mass, constituted fire. Further downwards the air was gathered together and became the medium, *or concentrated* spot for atmosphere.

And from the dampness exuding hence, water was created. This water was made half a circle (not being a circle), and from the water again was created a half circle of land.

The light particles of heat ascending upwards towards the moon caused the existence of winds ; and what remained of the original mass of heat occupied the spot where it fell.

The light particles of heat that remained became fire—and the light particles of water became breezes, or *zephyrs.*

The rest became earth.

The light particles of earth became dust, sand, stones, etc.; and the remainder rocks, mines, minerals.

SECTION 4

The Creator having made man, made him perfect, more so than the beast.

When the Creator determined upon creating man, He created the first man and woman; and after them, procreation was to take place and mankind was to be born from the woman.

The bodies of the first man and woman were like unto houses without inmates, which required to be inhabited, and about which, when once inhabited, peace would reign.

All the virtues that "Mind" possessed were given to the human body, and from the time that "Mind" entered into the body nothing more was created; everything having been already provided against the wants of man and beast.

The souls which were placed in the bodies had each, before being thus confined, the privilege granted them by the Creator of speaking, feeling, and possessing and enjoying all the senses.

Only they were ignorant of the truth of the origin of their existence; nor were they acquainted with the Creator.

They did not seek GOD by their works, nor did they in their ignorance consider or reflect on their end and future punishment.

It was therefore necessary that there should be specific *or peculiar* orders among them.

And the Almighty Creator had compassion on *the people* and granted them those specific orders.

And those specific orders are the borders, *or order,* of Truth and the order of Falsehood.

The right direction, *or path,* emanates from the order of Truth; but there is no true direction, *or path,* in the order of Falsehood, which is also the confines of error and corruption.

The order of Truth began to enlighten the people, and teach them to follow the truth, and know and acknowledge their Creator; and souls were turned to the knowledge of God, and they were persuaded of His existence by His Creatures.

Then again the Creator had mercy *upon His people*, and manifested to them an entire separation, in which separation there is no priesthood.

And the Creator showed Himself to them in His name and by His works and mercy, and He granted them miraculous revelations which proved His greatness and pointed out, *or testified*, to His Unity, by instilling in their hearts such exclamations as, God is Great! There is no God but God! God be praised! In the name of God the element and merciful! and so forth.

His manifestation, *or appearance*, was of the highest of high importance, for He called them unto Him by invitation, and spoke to them, saying "Am I not your God?"

And all the people believed in the Unity of the Most High, hence they had no excuse *for sin*.

It was necessary that they should regard God as superior to them all, wherefore repentance and punishment were established.

It was the wisest "Mind" (may God have mercy upon him!) that was standing with God in the place of the Priesthood, inviting the people to the knowledge of their Creator, the Most High, and of His Unity.

"Mind" manifested *to the people*, the arts and sciences, and God Almighty aided "Mind" with his Holy assistance, and gave him knowledge, and directions, and other requisites; and He appointed to "Mind" spiritual powers, and gave him the titles of Priest, Prophet, Director, Advisor, and the like attributes and appellations.

He appointed to him also such manifest signs as the sun, the stars, the mountains, the heaven, the earth, and the narrow path leading to heaven.

The order of Truth exists in perfect men who teach the people to distinguish between what is lawful and what is unlawful, and who caution them against sin and crimes, and instruct them in sciences and arts.

And the bendiction of God Almighty was promulgated

over the earth, and no man remained to whom the blessing did not extend ; therefore was there no excuse *for man to rebel.*

SECTION 5

GOD Almighty saw the existence of the Highest of the High in the image of humanity for a long period, and He is the origin, *or cause*, of the motion of the world and the establishment of all the worlds that are turning round it.

And, in the course of time, it was necessary that the people who were in simplicity should be made perfect in their intentions, and that they should be able to distinguish the obedient from the rebellious, the constant from the inconstant, the just from the unjust.

The Exalted did not disappear until the people were divided into two divisions ; one division to the assembly, the other to perdition.

The division of the righteous people was predestined from that very beginning to happiness and good.

The division of those who are born to perdition was predestined to disobedience from the beginning to the very last day.

And the Almighty manifestation was repeated and reiterated at different epochs, and He had much patience in order that His works might be completed, that the people might have time for repentance, and that the decrees of GOD might be established and punishments appointed.

When GOD Almighty disappeared, His setting star, which is the Perfect " Mind " (may God bless him !) also disappeared and left behind him the perfect " Soul," and my lord " Word " was his supporter.

SECTION 6

The existing orders, or *disciples*, of *Truth* that were in the " Word " invited the people to recognize the Unity of the Creator, and to aspire to the knowledge of the Creator's setting sun, the perfect " Mind."

And when " Soul " disappeared, he created himself a supporter, who is " Word," and the existing disciples of Truth were in the service of " Soul."

And when " Word " disappeared, there was created after him seven priests from amongst the disciples of Truth, and each priest has a spiritual invitation to the recognition of the Unity of the Great God.

Meanwhile the disciples of justice were looking to the disciples of injustice that this latter *should repent* and unite with the assembly.

The disciples of Truth had a law which they regarded as their faith, and they followed its injunctions.

After some time the seven priests declared that the cursed Iblis was manifested in the " Pronouncer of invitation," and in the law of his invitation ; moreover, that he established to himself a supporter, and the people of falsehood were with him and with his supporter.

The " Pronouncer of invitation " had twelve decrees, and his supporter had twelve decrees, established for the furtherance of eloquence and falsehood.

The existence of this speaker, or *Pronouncer of invitation*, was, in the days of the confines of Truth, imitating and studying the rules of the law, distinguishing good from evil, and cognizant of all except what was yet to come on the manifestation of the Unity in the millennium, at the second coming of Ali Almighty.

Possessing this knowledge, it came to pass that the disciples of Truth were deceived by the law of the " Pronouncer of invitation," which is the despised law as manifested by its works.

This " Pronouncer of invitation " was wont to declare himself a prophet, and one based upon a solid foundation.

He was also wont to rise upon the people with a sword, and with compulsion, in order to force them to embrace his law.

After the death of this eloquent one, his creed was propagated on the confines of Truth in order to explain the meaning of the descent from heaven.

And this eloquent one established, himself, an inward or secret law—and was possessed of a sufficient knowledge of the true law to base his own creed thereon.

After the passing away of the supporter *of this eloquent one*, the seven priests arose and embraced his law.

And every one of these priests had a long and lengthened duration, and the experience, *or duration,* of each of them is a hundred thousand years.

And the nations of the earth inherited the knowledge of the law of each priest that came forward obeying its injunctions, and appointing doctors, chosen from among themselves, to instruct others in the law of each priest, until the whole seven had passed away.

The whole of the duration of the seven priests extended over seven hundred thousand years.

Then appeared the Creator in uncovering the glory and shame of the Amr and established the all-powerful Ali to reveal his Unity and the extent of his power, to establish prayer, to separate knowledge, to give laws, to establish decrees, and to refer to the promises and the promised.

Then again the Creator appeared in a third manifestation, and all was repeated as in the second.

Meanwhile the renowned law continued to grow more feeble, or *to lose supporters.*

Section 7

And the people of Truth followed the direction of the law, holding fast by the truths, and reposing on the promises of the person promised them, for relief from the oppressions of the laws of each new revolution, until the seventieth revolution should have been completed, which revolution precedes the revolution of the Creator Almighty.

And the Creator established the law for the people in ten things:

First, in their equality in production.

Second, He established the power of materiality.

Third, He exhibited in the people the grace of existence.

Fourth, He granted mediators.

Fifth, He granted the power of choice.

Sixth, He made freedom of action necessary to the people.

Seventh, He widened the prolongation of patience.

Eighth, He established pre-eminence by means of one's best endeavours.

Ninth, He opened the gates of repentance,

And, tenth, He spread before the people the promises of the promised.

When these ten epochs were completed, the existing disciples of Truth followed the faith of the Priests of the Creator, and did their best endeavours to bring forward Shutneel, the Doctor (the praises of God be upon him !)

And God Almighty on his manifestation established Shutneel as a priest to the people, and ordered the angels to worship him, and all obeyed, except Hareth, the son of Tirmah ; he refused, and was proud.

Section 8

Hareth was serving in the priesthood with all the other angels, and he was among them when the Creator commanded them to be subjected to Shutneel.

And the angels worshipped Shutneel, but Hareth refused and abandoned Paradise, and, quitting its borders, all the disciples of Falsehood fell with him, and Paradise was rid of their presence.

The Paradise of the Creator extended all over the earth, and the disciples of Truth entered therein and received the commands of Shutneel, the Doctor.

And they kept apart from those who deny the Unity of God, and turned out the disciples of falsehood from among them.

Then were established the order of Truth, and the words of verity. (God's peace be upon them !)

And the priesthood belonged to Shutneel, who is Adam the happy ; and Hareth and his followers were jealous, and plotted contrivances to deprive him of his paradise, and to establish an enmity between him and his race.

Now these deceivers never desisted from their object ; they came and said, " We have a piece of advice to give to you, O our Lord, Enoch ; and to your partner, Sharkh, which is good for you both."

This they kept repeating until they were admitted into the presence of Enoch and of his partner Sharkh.

When they came before them they worshipped them ; and Enoch, who is the second Adam, said, " Perhaps you have

repented and seek forgiveness for your blasphemy and disobedience to the priesthood in having assisted Iblis and his associates."

But the deceiver replied, " No, I swear by your head and by the Creator, I have come to give you advice by reason of the interest I take in your welfare, and to warn you against the injustice of Shutneel in having compelled you to be subjected to him."

I have heard our Lord the Creator (praises be to Him !) say that the priesthood belonged only to Enoch and Sharkh, caliphs in paradise.

Hereupon Enoch made him swear, and he swore to him.

And as it was the custom that whosoever swore by God falsely should be punished, no one dared to swear by Him falsely.

And when the deceiver swore to Enoch and Sharkh that he was sincere in what he said, true in his deeds, and most pure in his words, they believed him, and fell into sin in many ways.

First, by neglecting the commandments of Shutneel.

Secondly, by changing the priesthood from the person to whom it belonged.

Thirdly, by changing the will of the Creator (praises be to Him !) and opposing what He commanded them ; for the Creator had said, " Do not approach this tree, that ye be not of the unjust."

Fourthly, by believing in the words of one they knew to be deceitful.

And, fifthly, by accepting advice from the father of deceit.

Now after they had committed these sins, and had so far forgotten themselves, Enoch and Sharkh awoke to a sense of what they had done and perceived their baseness.

Knowing that Shutneel was aware of their thoughts, and that they had no other way left them but that of repentance and of suing for forgiveness, they went to Shutneel.

They went to him crying, repenting of, and confessing their sins, and spoke to the following effect :—

Thou art the forgiver, and we are the transgressors,

thou art the pardoner of sins, thou art the merciful, thou are the Creator, thou art the clement, oh! our God, forgive us.

With such like words they sued for mercy.

And when Shutneel knew that Enoch and Sharkh were truly repentant he begged the Creator to forgive them and to restore them to the position, or *grade*, they formerly occupied.

The creatures who committed this sin were five in number, Enoch, Sharkh, Aneel, Tarbookh, and Hibal.

And Enoch is the "Soul," Sharkh, is my lord the "Word," Aneel is the plaintiff, and Tabookh, their speaker.

And the deceiver is the supporter of the devil, not Iblis, and he blasphemed against Shutneel.

Section 9

Some people have been foolish, or *ignorant* enough to imagine that Enoch and Sharkh are the "Prophet" and "Foundation," but this belief is erroneous.

Moreover, such a belief would be the real cause of perdition, for Enoch is the perfect "Soul," and "Sharkh" is my lord "Word," the eternal.

And this is the decree of Adam, the happy.

And the Priest, the truthful, has said, that Adam is three Adams—Adam the *first*, and Adam the happy, the entire, and Adam the forgetful, the resolute.

And it is said with regard to Adam the second, in the Koran, that he rebelled against his God; now this man was Enoch.

And Adam the forgetful, who was also called Shait, is Sharkh.

Moreover, it is said that Shutneel chose them from among his people, and that each of them is related to him.

And it is furthermore said, that Adam the second and Adam the third, who is Sharkh, served in the presence of Adam the first (Shutneel).

Enoch and Sharkh are the "Soul" and the "Word," and whosoever believeth contrary to this creed, is of the unjust in this world, and in the next world, of those who are lost.

So may God make us and all our brethren disciples of the true faith, and deliver us from doubts after having attained to the truths! Amen.

Section 10

Now when the disciples of Truth beheld the paradise of God and the change in the law of the "Djin," they combined together to contradict the existence of the Unity.

And this unbelief grew upon them until respect for the Creator (praises be to Him!) had left them.

Whereupon the pure Shutneel passed away and left behind him Enoch, who is the perfect "Soul," and his supporter, Sharkh, who is "Word."

And the disciples of Truth that remained, followed the doctrines of Enoch during his presence upon *earth.*

When Enoch disappeared, his supporter, who is my lord, the Word, established the spiritual law and declared the Unity of the Creator (praises be to Him!).

And when the Word disappeared, there came after him seven praiseworthy priests from among the disciples of Truth, similar to those that came in the time of Shutneel.

On the appearance of each of these priests they severally declared the Unity of the Creator, and the disciples of Truth followed the law of Enoch, receiving in their priesthood only the *Morteddeens* and no others.

Now these Morteddeens were companions of those in the human race who recognize the Unity of God from the beginning to the day of resurrection, which is the day of judgment.

Section 11

Now when the term of the law of Adam (*Shutneel*), which term was a thousand years (a short time in comparison to the term that preceded it, which was the term of the praiseworthy law) had passed away, the will of God commanded the appearance of the prophets, the invited.

And the Creator was wrath against the people of those days; for they inclined towards the believers in the Trinity, and he took away His grace from them.

Then appeared Noah, the son of Lamech, as a prophet, and he was the first who established the law which invited the people to worship and believe in the unity of an image.

Shem was the supporter of Noah, and he possessed twelve decrees.

And Noah continued in the faith of the people of Truth, who profited by his revelations, and invited them to cognizance of the book Wahi, which taught the difference between good and evil.

After Shem, appeared seven priests, and the disciples of Truth entered into their beliefs ; and when the laws which established the greatness of the Creator had been developed, and their sources studied, then the people began to desire a new organization.

And the faith of Noah extended to all people, because the punishment of the deluge had collected all the people under one head, and moreover, the miracles that had taken place before the appearance of Noah continued to direct the attention of the people to the unity of the Creator.

Now, when Noah appeared, the signs that were established in the law pointed out that which is to come, by divulging the unity of Hakem (may his power be glorified !).

At the time of Noah, the disciples of Truth were strong in the knowledge of the unity of Hakem, but weak in the knowledge of the Son, and of his existing in the Father.

And when the term of the law of Noah was completed, there appeared Abraham, the son of Azr, and his supporter, one of the sons of Ishmael, and after them, seven priests.

And the people of Truth acknowledged the law of Abraham, and accepted the invitations of the priests that came after him, and the knowledge of the unity of Hakem.

And from the seed of Abraham prophets appeared, like unto Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and others.

Then appeared Moses, the son of Isaac, and the people of Truth followed his law, and the interpretation of his supporter, who was Joshua, the son of Nun.

Then there appeared other prophets, and their power in the knowledge of the unity was as the amount of saliva in the throat of man.

And these were Isaiah, Hezekiah, Nathaniel, Daniel, Doodoosalem, and the like, among the prophets.

From among the respectable Doctors—Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle; the peace of God be upon them!

Section 12

Now when Jesus, the son of Joseph, appeared with the New Testament, and established himself as the Lord, the Messiah who is Jesus (the peace of God be upon him), he was accompanied by his four apostles, John, Matthew, Mark and Luke (the peace of God be upon them), and the people of Truth profited by his revelations, although they pretended to the truth, in the law, and copied the law of Moses in explaining the law of Jesus.

Then appeared Simon the happy, and the people of Truth were on his side, until the time of the seven priests had passed away.

And the strength of the belief, *of the seven priests*, in the unity was as the amount of saliva in the throat of man.

After this, Mohammed, the son of Abdallah, appeared with his law, which is the law of Islam.

And Mohammed established Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib as his supporter, and all the disciples of Truth followed the law of Islam, as they had done every other law that had preceded it.

Now Mohammed was in the time of Suleiman, the Persian.

When Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib came forward with his explanations *of the law of Islam*, the people of Truth believed in them, and continued therein, until seven priests had passed away after him.

These seven priests were of the seed of Mohammed, and are Hassan, Hussein, Ali-Ibn-Abu il Hussein, Ibn-Mohammed Ali, Jaffar Ibn-Mohammed, Ismail Ibn-Jaffar, and the name of the seventh is not known.

The time of Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah was more evident, and more demonstrative of power, than all the epochs that preceded him; consequently, they pretended for singleness in Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, moreover because the prophets Noah,

Abraham, Moses, and Jesus foretold the appearance of a man, the highest of the high, whose rank is great, whose name be gorified.

This was Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib.

When the term of the priesthood of Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah was completed, Mohammed Ibn-Ismail, the prophet, appeared, whose law is the final of all laws inciting to the right path ; and he is from the seed of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib.

And to Mohammed Ibn-Ismail there is a supporter secretly established in Paradise, and no one knows his name, because he does not appear in the manifestation of the law which we have.

But it is certain that Mohammed is a prophet, and that God has sent him an evident book ; and he has an open law and a secret law, and his works are the works of the eloquent that have passed before him.

Not that Mohammed is not like unto one of them, but that he is their partner against injustice.

And he has brought forward the law, the invitation to annihilation, the establishment of a delegate, and the promulgation of licentiousness.

Section 13

When Mohammed Ibn-Ismail appeared and introduced his law, the disciples of Truth believed in his law and in his prophecies, and they recognized his excellence and his supporter, who was Sayeed il Muhdi Ibn-Ahmed.

And it is through Mohammed Ibn-Ismail and his supporter that are made perfect the perfect in eloquence, the holy men, and the priesthood.

Then the power of Mohammed passed to his descendants, who are the priests, the respected, until it reached Sayeed il Muhdi, and from Sayeed il-Muhdi it passed to the sessions, and ultimately appeared openly in the kingdom and in the government, through Kaem, Mansoor, Maaz, Azeez, and Hakem, the Eternal, the Assisted, the Cherished, the Beloved, and the Governor.

When the time of rejoicing and of the last Godly manifestation arrived, the wisdom of God ordained the appearance

of the Prophet Zacharias, and this time was that of the third priest of the priesthood of Mohammed Ibn-Ismail.

Before this time, the perfect " Mind " became manifested in Abi Zacharias in the form of verse from the Creator, sent through Karoon, and the Lord had given forth a law which was the perfect " Soul " represented by Abi Saad, the twenty-first anointed.

And the existing of Abi Zacharias was in the assembly spiritually, and to him are attributed miracles secretly performed, which will be explained by the most powerful of the Unitarians to the weak among them.

Section 14

Abi Zacharias sent Karoon to the country of the Yeman, and surnamed him the Muhdi (director).

And Karoon understood the secrets of the four books, viz., the Psalms, the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Koran ; and his faith was promulgated all over the earth.

And his faith was in the place of one whole day, of the three days mentioned in the Gospel, on the preaching of Jesus, who said to the people, " Destroy this temple, and I will raise it after three days."

And it was meant by the three days that the faith of Jesus should last half a day, from twelve o'clock to the evening; and the faith of Suleiman the Persian, from the time of the appearing of the Comforter, who is Mohammed, was to last one entire day ; and the faith of Karoon also one entire day ; and the faith of Kaem il Muntazar Hamzeh Ibn-Ali, at the time of his manifestation, half a day from morning to noon.

In the preaching of the Lord the Messiah, no manifestation takes place ; for Jesus said unto the people, " My time is not consummated ; after me will appear a director who is prevented from coming at this time."

And the Creator (may He be praised !) manifested Himself corporeally, in the time of the fourth Heaven, in Abdallah Ibn Ahmed, under the name of Ali ; He is the exalted over all exalted, unto whom belongeth the right of command.

He also manifested Himself corporeally in the time of the

fifth Heaven, which is Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah, under the name of Maal.

The appearing of Maal (may he be honoured and glorified!) was in the country of Tadmor to the east, and his appearance was extremely beautiful and glorious, and he was most rich, and travelled alone with one thousand camels laden with goods and merchandise.

The duration of Maal, the exalted, lasted until the time of the fifth priest was completed, who is Mohammed the aforesaid.

After him appeared his son Husein, who is the sixth Heaven, and after Husein his son Abdallah il Muhdi, who is called Ibn Ahmed, but who should be called Muhdi, and after him, Sayeed il Muhdi, who is the seventh from among the prophets.

The Creator again manifested Himself under the name of Kaem, as an infant, and in appearance as the son of Maal.

And when the Almighty Maal chose to disappear, he called unto him Sayeed il Muhdi, and commanded him to serve our Lord Kaem (may his name be glorified!), and made him lord of the priesthood, and consigned to his care property and merchandise, and appointed him regent over the education of Kaem.

And the power of the disciples of Truth, during the time of Sayeed il Muhdi, and during the time of his supporter Cadah, was most great.

And the government of the prophets, and of the advisers, and of the priests, came to an end with the disappearance of Sayeed il Muhdi, in whom mercy was most perfect, and whose coming to give advice to the world, and whose growing up, and the passing of whose spirit, gave knowledge to the souls of those who were in the Truth; and he was glorified, the most glorious.

And then appeared as a true prophet Hamzeh Ibn-Ali, God's praises be upon him!

Section 15

At the completion of this era of the world, there commenced a second era, and the wisdom of God thought

proper to produce Kaem, the Almighty, with Sayeed il Muhdi.

And those who recognized the unity of GOD were steadfast in the secrets of truth, and in the faith of Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib, his progeny.

And the secrets of Truth succeeded from one to another unto Sayeed il Muhdi, and from Sayeed il Muhdi the secrets of Truth reached the Lord of Truth (may his name be reverenced !), and the people recognized Kaem as a powerful GOD, because they had witnessed his miracles, and because he made manifest unto them wonderful miracles whilst he was an infant under the guardianship of Sayeed il Muhdi.

When Il Kaem grew up, he took to the priesthood, and when he appeared in public, mounted on horseback, with the soldiers in his service, Sayeed il Muhdi used to walk before him, calling aloud, " I am the servant and slave of our Lord Il Kaem, and the priesthood was a thing in my consignment, and he has taken it from me."

After this, Sayeed died, and his soul passed to Makhled Ibn-Kebdad, one of the kings of the West.

Now, before Sayeed died, he had been an enemy of Keis Dad, the father of Makhled.

And when Makhled grew up, and his age was six, he was informed that Sayeed had been the enemy of his father ; so he prepared to fight, and assembled his soldiers to go against Il Kaem (may his name be reverenced !).

And when Makhled was eleven years old the number of his soldiers reached four hundred thousand.

The reason for his assembling all these was because the Almighty had said : " Behold the people of the cursed and abominable Makhled Ibn-Kebdad, surnamed Abu-Yazeed, there are no people who are more sinful, more disorderly, and drunkards."

Now Abu-Yazeed desired to have a contention with Il Kaem (may his glory be sanctified !), and among his soldiers there was cheapness, and health, and peace, whilst to Il Kaem's *soldiers* there was only his presence and the presence of the forty-six.

And the soldiers of Il Kaem were few ; but he granted

them his assistance and majesty, and went forth in person with them, to fight Abu-Yazeed.

And he defeated them, and killed them, and destroyed them, and revenged himself; and when this great miracle became known, the faith of Il Kaem, the most glorious, reached the country of the West, and was promulgated all over the earth.

Section 16

At the close of the time of the Almighty Kaem, the Creator most praised manifested Himself bodily and in the priesthood in Mansoor, and it was apparently visible that he was the son of Il Kaem, and that Il Kaem had transferred upon him the priesthood, and had clothed him with the Caliphat, and assigned his power to him.

And the faith of Mansoor was promulgated all over the earth, and made known to all assemblies, and Mansoor performed miracles, and changed some of the articles of the law, as the Almighty Kaem had also done before him, and his priesthood took place in the country of the West.

And Maaz sent Abdallah, whose name was Gouhair, with soldiers to Egypt, and he defeated the sons of Abbas, and conquered Cairo.

After this, the Almighty Maaz went to Cairo, and concluded his faith in that city.

After Maaz, appeared the chief Azeez, the Almighty, and his appearance took place in Cairo, and to him Maaz consigned the priesthood.

And the Almighty Azeez manifested signs which explained and made evident the unity, and he performed miracles which could not be performed by anyone, unless one inspired by God.

And he proclaimed his faith, and his miracles were known throughout the world, and there remained not a single man who did not receive the faith. Praises be to him whose grace has been so promulgated by reason of his mercy!

Then the Creator most praised appeared in Hakem; may his power be glorified, in Cairo!

And the five chiefs, Il Kaem, Mansoor, Maaz, Azeez, and

Hakem appeared as though they were sons of each other, and this secret priesthood passed together with the heavenly posts, from the post of Zacharias to the post of Hakem (may his power be glorified !), until it reached its real proprietor, Hamzeh, who, in truth, is the Kaem ; the celebrated Hamzeh Ibn-Ali ; the blessings of God be upon him !

Section 17

The repetition of these heavenly characters in human bodies, with the change of names and appearances, was to facilitate the understanding of the people, to make perfect the way, and to establish a permanent law ; otherwise these heavenly characters are all one.

When Hakem, who is most praiseworthy, renounced the priesthood, and clothed Il Kaem therewith, from whom it came eventually to Hamzeh Ibn-Ali (the praises of God be upon him !), the Kaem, that is, Hamzeh, established his faith, and made the " Soul " his law, and my lord the " Word " weak among the powerful.

And Hamzeh established the Order of the Truth in his faith, and also ordered Hakem to follow the unity of God and the Godhead, and the Unitarians entered into his faith with many people from among the people of tradition and the accepted ; and their entering was in ease, and with inclination to rest.

But there arose among the people a dispute and contention, and they discovered that God was angry, for He punished them, and hid Himself from them ; then the faith was changed, and innovations were introduced.

After a year, the Creator Almighty *again* manifested His unity, and He was glorified, and the faith re-established, the laws were made manifest, the covenants were written, and Il Kaem (the praises of God be upon him !) invited the people to the Unity, established the law, and taught the people of Truth to contend among each other to enter into the faith.

And when it pleased God Almighty to withdraw Himself, He brought Ali the Evident, and made him take forty oaths *to the effect* that he could not raise affliction or misfortune on His chosen ones, the Unitarians.

SECTION 18

Then the Almighty withdrew Himself, and then appeared upon earth as an Evil Spirit ; and this Evil Spirit remained on earth seven years, and his limits were from Antioch to Alexandria.

And the companions of this evil spirit were tempting the Unitarians, of whom they gained a great number, both men, women, and children.

This great Tempter had been spoken of and alluded to in the Gospel in several places, and Suleiman the Persian (peace be upon him !) had also referred to him in the following verse :—

> The Evil Spirit of Resurrection had only one eye from the time of his setting out from Aleppo, in the days of evil;
> And all the Greeks were his supporters in his undertakings which were only defeated by making war.

Since this Tempter was formerly prophesied of, the Unitarians supported the evils and misfortunes brought upon them with patience.

Then appeared my Lord Boha-eddin, and he was possessed of "the Order of Truth," and Moktanna Boha-eddin was the last that appeared ; after him no laws remained uncompleted ; he fulfilled the creation, and completed the conversion of the people, and delivered the rest of the Unitarians.

The time of the prophecy of Moktanna was seventeen years, and he used to refer his Epistles to the priest that was concealed in a place known to him, and also to the three spirits, the "Soul," the "Word," and the "Preceding," who were also concealed in a place known to my Lord Moktanna.

And when Moktanna disappeared, he published his noble Epistles, with the Epistles of Il Kaem, and the Epistles of Hamzeh, the wisdom of Unitarianism, which Epistles showed that these noble persons appeared personally, and set down a law, which law teaches us to know the Laws, the Beginning, the End, the Promise, the Threat, the Reward, the Punishment, the Past, and the Future.

And this is what we think proper to show from the time of revelation to the day of the last resurrection.

Abstract of what is Necessary for a Unitarian to Know, to Believe, and to Observe, Taken Briefly from the Book of Law.

It is necessary that the Unitarian should possess the knowledge of four things :—

1. The knowledge of our Lord God (may His name be exalted !).
2. The knowledge of Il Kaem.
3. The knowledge of the Prophets.
4. The knowledge of those virtues which it is necessary to observe.

It is also necessary *that the Unitarian* should believe in the Almighty God in His human form, without mixing it with questions of "Where," or "How much," or "Who," and that he should believe that that same figure had no flesh, no blood, nor body, nor weight ; but that it is like unto a mirror when you put the same into a scale to weigh it, and look at yourself in it ; for does it weigh more by your looking at your face in it ? So is the figure of the Almighty ; it does not eat, nor drink, not feel, nor can incidents or time alter it. It is invisible, but contains the power of being ever present, and it appeared to us on earth in human form, that we should be better able to comprehend it, there being no power in us wherewith to compare the divinity.

It is also necessary *that the Unitarian* should believe in the Almighty God represented in the Ten Directors, who are Ali, El Bar, Zacharias, Elias, Maal, Il Kaem, Mansoor, Maaz, Azeez, and Hakem, and all are One God, and there is no other God but Him.

The highest Ali was all his time invisible, and there was no Priesthood with him, and his appearance was at the beginning of the world. El Bar was invisible in the Priesthood.

After El Bar appeared Adam il Gerone, who is Enoch, with the Unitarian Law, and he followed the Unitarian steps of El Bar. After him, appeared seven priests from the "Order of Truth," who followed his steps ; and after these, appeared the givers of the Laws, who are Noah, Abraham,

Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Mohammed the second, and Sayeed il Muhdi, and all these were one Soul. Then the Priesthood reached its rightful owner, who is the victorious Kaem Hamzeh Ibn-Ali (the praises of God be upon him !).

On the Knowledge of the Seven Laws,

that is, " The Truth of the Tongue," " The Preservance of Friendship between Brothers," " The Abandonment of the Worship of Idols," " The Disbelief in Evil Spirits and Deceivers," " The Worship of Our Lord in every Age and Generation," " To be Satisfied with the Acts of God whatever they might be," and " To be Resigned to His Will."

" The Truth of the Tongue " is the belief in the divinity of El Hakem (praises be to him !), the belief in the priesthood of the Kaem (Hamzeh), and in the virtue of the Four Prophets, their nobility and their perfection ; the belief in the Prophets of Truth, and in their prophecy and their qualifications ; the belief in the Priests, the Leaders ; the belief in the Noble Wisdom which is the saving religion ; the belief in the Transmigration of Souls from one body to another ; the belief in the Resurrection from the Dead and in the reward or punishment which will assuredly follow it.

" The Preservance of Friendship between Brothers " is to recognize their ranks, and to love them whether they be near or far from us ; to humble ourselves before our superiors ; to treat well those who are *low in rank* among us, to support them both secretly and publicly, to give them their due rights whether temporal or spiritual, and to regard them as friends.

" The Abandonment of the Worship of Idols " is the abandonment of the doctrine of those who believe in the Tanzeel (Koran), and those who say that God is not present everywhere, and those who believe in the Traditions, and who make Ali-Ibn-Abu-Talib like unto God, and say that God is not One.

" The Disbelief in Evil Spirits and Deceivers " is to curse the devils and those who belong to the " Order of Falsehood."

" The Worship of our Lord in every Age and Generation,"

is, that man should believe that He is separate in His person, and has no visible body, form, or weight.

"The Law to be Satisfied with his Acts whatever they might be," is to He resigned to His will, and this resignation has ten degrees, namely: the Knowledge, the Belief, the Authority, the Obedience, the Acceptance, the Hearing, the Trust, the Reference, the Patience, and the Thanksgiving. The Acts of the Almighty Creator, of which it is man's duty to be satisfied, are numerous, and the greatest of them have ten degrees also, namely, the Revelation, the Concealment, the Weakness, the Miracles, the System, Humility, Lawfulness, Unlawfulness, Fate and Destiny.

And these are the Seven Laws which belong to the Unity, and "The Truth of the Tongue" is instead of Prayer, and "The Preservance of Friendship between Brothers" is instead of giving Alms, and "The Abandonment of the Worship of Idols" is instead of Fasting, and "the Disbelief in Evil Spirits" is instead of the "Proofs," and "The Acknowledgment of Our Lord" is instead of the "Two Proofs," and "To be Satisfied with his Acts" is instead of Warfare, and "The Resignation to his Will" is instead of Authority.

The conclusion is, whosoever knows and believes in what has preceded, and is sound of mind and body, and of full age, and free from servitude, will be of those who are destined to the ranks, and entitled to be present at the private assemblies, at which whosoever is present will be saved by Almighty God, and whosoever is absent will repent. May God facilitate His ways of good, and pour upon us His blessing! He is the Assistant, the Giver of Victory, the Wise and the Experienced! Amen.

CHAPTER XXIV

RESEMBLANCE OF THE DRUSE RELIGION TO THAT OF THE LAMA OF THIBET

Any inquiry into the religion and customs of the Druses would be incomplete without including an article by Madam Blavatsky, tracing the resemblance she found between the Druses and the Lamas. Whatever may be the general opinion as to the veracity and learning of Madam Blavatsky, no one will deny that she had an unrivalled acquaintance with all the religious and ancient literature of the East.

The following article, which is given in full, with the original notes, appeared in an early issue of *The Theosophist*:

Mr. L. Oliphant's new work, *Land of Gilead*, attracts considerable attention. Reviews appeared some time since, but we had to lay the subject aside, until now, for lack of space. We shall now have something to say, not of the work itself—though justice can hardly be sufficiently done to the writings of that clever author—but of what he tells us respecting the Druses, those mystics of Mount Lebanon of whom so little is known. We may perchance shed some new light on the subject. Mr. Oliphant thinks that—

"The Druse has a firm conviction that the end of the world is at hand. Recent events have so far tallied with the enigmatical prophecies of his sacred books, that he looks forward to the speedy resurrection of El Hakim, the founder and divine personage of the sect. In order to comprehend this, the connection between China and Druse theology has to be remembered. The souls of all pious Druses are supposed to be occupying, in large numbers, certain cities in the west of China. The end of the world

will be signalized by the approach of a mighty army from the East against the contending powers of Islam and Christianity. This army will be under the command of the Universal Mind and will consist of millions of Chinese Unitarians. To it Christians and Mohammedans will surrender and march before it to Mecca. El Hakim will then appear ; at his command the Kaaba will be demolished by fire from Heaven, and the resurrection of the dead will take place. Now that Russia has come into collision with China, the Druses see the fulfilment of their sacred prophecies, and are eagerly waiting for an Armageddon in which they believe themselves destined to play a prominent part."

Mr. Laurence Oliphant is, in our opinion, one of England's best writers. He is also more deeply acquainted with the inner life of the East than most of the travellers and writers who have written on the subject—not even excepting Captain and Mrs. R. Burton. But even this acute and observing intellect could hardly fathom the secret of the profoundly mystical beliefs of the Druses. To begin with, El Hakim is *not* the founder of their sect. Their ritual and dogmas were *never* made known but to those who had been admitted into their brotherhood. Their origin is next to unknown. As to their external religion, or rather what has transpired of it, that can be told in a few words. The Druses are believed to be a mixture of Kurds, Mardi-Arabs, and other semi-civilized tribes. We humbly maintain that they are the descendants of and a mixture of, mystics *of all nations*—mystics who, in the face of cruel and unrelenting persecution by the Orthodox Christian Church and Orthodox Islamism, have, ever since the first centuries of Mohammedan propaganda, been gathered together, and who gradually made a permanent settlement in the fastnesses of Syria and Mount Lebanon, where they had from the first found refuge. Since then they have preserved the strictest silence upon their beliefs and truly occult rites. Later on their warlike character, great bravery and unity of purpose, which made their foes, either Mussulmans or Christians, equally fear them, helped them toward forming an independent community, or, as we may term it, an *imperium in imperio*. They are the Sikhs of Asia Minor, and their polity offers many points of similarity

with the late "commonwealth" of the followers of Guru Nanak, even extending to their mysticism and indomitable bravery. But the two are even more closely related to a third and far more mysterious community of religionists, of which nothing or next to nothing is known by outsiders: we mean that fraternity of Thibetan Lamaists, known as the Brotherhood of Khe-lang, who mix but little with the rest. Even Csoma de Koros, who passed several years with the Lamas, learned hardly more of the religion of these *Chakravartins* (wheel-turners) than what they chose to let him know of their esoteric rites, and of the Khe-langs he learned positively nothing.

The mystery that hangs over the scriptures and religion of the Druses is far more impenetrable than that connected with the Amritsar and Lahore "Disciples," whose Grantha is well known and has been translated into European languages more than once. Of the alleged forty-five sacred books [1] of the Lebanon mystics none were ever seen, let alone examined, by any European scholar.

Many manuscripts have never left the underground Khalwehs (place of religious meeting), invariably built under the meeting-room on the ground floor, and the public Thursday assemblies of the Druses are simply blinds intended for over-curious travellers and neighbours.

Verily a strange sect are the disciples of Hamzeh, as they call themselves. Their Akkals, or spiritual teachers, besides having, like the Sikh Akkali, the duty of defending the visible place of worship, which is merely a large unfurnished room, are also the guardians of the Mystical Temple and the "wise men," of the Initiates of their mysteries—as their name of Akkal implies, *Akl* being in Arabic "intelligence" or "wisdom." It is improper to call them Druses, as they

[1] The work presented by Nasr-Allah to the French king as a portion of the Druse scriptures, and translated by Petis de la Croix in 1701, is pronounced a forgery. Not one of the copies now in the possession of the Bodleian, Vienna, or Vatican Libraries is genuine; and, besides, each of them is a copy from the other. Great was always the curiosity of the travellers, and greater yet the efforts of the indomitable and ever-prying missionary, to penetrate behind the veil of Druse worship, but all have resulted in failure. The strictest secrecy as to the nature of their beliefs, the peculiar rites practised in their subterranean khalwehs, and the contents of their canonical books, was enjoined upon their followers by Hamzeh and Boha-eddin, the chief and first disciple of the former.

regard it as an insult; nor are they in reality the followers of Dorazi, a heretical pupil of Hamzeh, but the true disciples of the latter. The origin of that personage, who appeared among them in the eleventh century, coming from Central Asia, and whose secret or mystery name is El Hamma, is quite unknown to our European scholars. His spiritual titles are "Universal Source of Mind," "Ocean of Light," and "Absolute or Divine Intelligence." They are, in short, repetitions of those of the Thibetan Dalai-Lama, whose appellation, "Path to the Ocean,"[1] means Path or "Way to the Ocean of Light" (Intelligence) or Divine Wisdom—both titles being identically the same. It is curious that the Hebrew word *lamad* should also mean the "God-taught."

An English Orientalist recently found that the religion of Nanak had a good deal of Buddhism in it (art. "Diwali," in *Calcutta Review*). This would only be natural, since the Empire of Hindustan is the land of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas But that the religion of the Druses, between whose geographical and ethnological position and that of the Hindus there is an abyss, should be so, is far more incomprehensible and strange. Yet it is a fact. They are more Lamaists in their beliefs and certain rites, than any other people on the face of the globe. The fact may be contradicted, but it will only be because Europe knows next to nothing of either. Their system of government is set down as feudal and patriarchal, while it is as theocratic as that of the Lamaists—or as that of the Sikhs, as it used to be. The mysterious representation of the Deity appears in Hamzeh, whose spirit is said to guide them, and periodically reincarnates itself in the person of the chief Akkal of the Druses, as it does in the Guru-Kings of the Sikhs, some of whom, like Guru

[1] "Lama" means path or road in the vulgar Thibetan language, but in that figurative sense it conveys the meaning of *way*; as the "way to wisdom or salvation." Strangely enough it also means "cross." It is the Roman figure X or ten, the emblem of *perfection* or perfect number, and stood for ten with the Egyptians, Chinese, Phœnicians, Romans, etc. It is also found in the Mexican secular calendars. The Tartars call it Lama from the Scytho-Turanian word *lamh*, hand (from the number of fingers on both hands), and it is synonymous with the *jod* of the Chaldees, "and thus became *the name of a cross*, of the High Priest of the Tartars, and of the Lamaic Messenger of God," says the author of *The Book of God*, in the "Commentaries on the Apocalypse." With the Irish, *Iuam* signifies the *head of the church*, a spiritual chief.

Govind, claimed to be the reincarnations of Nanak, while the Dalai Lamas of Thibet claim to be those of Buddha. The latter, by the way, are loosely called Shaberons and Hobilgans (both in various degrees reincarnations not of Buddha, the man, but of his Buddh-like divine spirit) by Abbé Huc and others, without any regard to the difference in the appellation; El Hamma or Hamzeh came from the "land of the Word of God." Where was that land? Swedenborg, the Northern Seer, advised his followers to search for the Lost Word among the hierophants of Tartary, Thibet and China. To this we may add a few explanatory and corroborative facts. Ll'hassa, the theocratic metropolis of Thibet, is commonly translated as "God-land," that is to say, this is the only English equivalent that we can find.[1]

Though separated by the Karakorum range and Little Thibet, the Great Thibet is on the same Asiatic plateau in which our Biblical scholars designate the table-land of Pamir.[2] Thibet, or Ti-Boutta, will yield, etymologically, the words Ti—which is the equivalent for God in Chinese—and Buddha or Wisdom; the land then of the Wisdom Deity, or the incarnations of Wisdom. It is also called "Bod-Jod." Now "Jid" and "Jod" are synonymous apocalyptic and phallic names for the Deity—Yod being the Hebrew name for God. Godfrey Higgins shows in his *Celtic Druids* the Welsh Druids altering the name Bod-Jid into Budd-ud, which with them too meant the "Wisdom of Jid"—what people now call "God." [3]

The religion of the Druses is said to be a compound of

[1] And a most unsatisfactory term it is, as the Lamaists have no conception of the anthropomorphic Deity which the English word "God" represents. For Buddha (the latter name being quite unknown to the common people) is their equivalent for that All-embracing, Superior Good or Wisdom from which all proceeds as does the light from the sun, the cause being nothing personal, but simply an abstract principle. And it is this that in all our theosophical writing, for the want of a better word, we have to term "God-like" and "Divine."

[2] There are several Pamirs in Central Asia. There is the Alichur Pamir which lies more north than either; the Great Pamir with Lake Victoria in its vicinity; Taghdumbash Pamir and the Little Pamir more south; and eastward another chain of Pamirs dividing Mustagh Pass and Little Guhjal. We would like to know on which of these we have to look for the Garden of Eden.

[3] The name in Hebrew for sanctuary is *te-bah*, and *ti-boutta* and *te-bet*, also a cradle of the human race, *thebeth* meaning a "box," the "ark" of Noah and the floating cradle of Moses.

Judaism, Mohammedanism and Christianity, strongly tinged with Gnosticism and the Magian system of Persia. Were people to call things by their right names, sacrificing all self-conceit to truth, they might confess things otherwise. They could say, for instance, that Mohammedanism being a compound of Chaldeeism, Christianity and Judaism; Christianity a mixture of Judaism, Gnosticism and Paganism; and Judaism a wholesale Egypty-Chaldean Kabalism, masquerading under differing names and fables, made to fit the bits and scraps of the real history of the Israelite tribes —the religious system of the Druses would then be found one of the last survivals of the archaic Wisdom-Religion. It is entirely based on that element of practical mysticism of which branches have from time to time sprung into existence. They pass under the unpopular names of Kabalism, Theosophy and Occultism. Except Christianity—which, owing to the importance it gives to the principal prop of its doctrine of salvation (we mean the dogmas of Satan), had to anathematise the practice of theurgy—every religion, including Judaism and Mohammedanism, credits these above-named branches. Civilization having touched with its materialistic, all-levelling and all-destroying hand even India and Turkey, amid the din and chaos of crumbling faiths and old sciences, the reminiscence of archaic truths is now fast dying out.

It has become popular and fashionable to denounce "the old and mouldy *superstitions* of our forefathers," verily even amongst the most natural allies of the students of theurgy or occultism—the Spiritualists. Among the many creeds and faiths striving to follow the cyclic tide, and helping it themselves to sweep away the knowledge of old, strangely blind to the fact that the same powerful wave of materialism and modern science also sweeps away their own foundations, the only religions which have remained alive as ever to these forgotten truths of old, are those which from the first have kept strictly aloof from the rest. The Druses, while outwardly mixing with Moslems and Christians, and alike ever ready to read the Koran as well as the Gospels in their Thursday public meetings, have never allowed an uninitiated stranger to penetrate the mysteries of their own doctrines. Intelligence alone, they say, communicates to the soul (which to them is

mortal, though it survives the body) the enlivening and divine spark of the Supreme Wisdom, or *Ti-meami*, but it must be screened from all non-believers in Hamzeh. The work of the soul is to seek Wisdom, and the substance of earthly wisdom is to know Universal Wisdom, or " GOD," as other religionists call that principle. This is the doctrine of the Buddhists and Lamaists who say " Buddha " where the Druses say " Wisdom "—one word being the translation of the other. " In spite of their external adoption of the religious customs of the Moslems, of their readiness to educate their children in Christian schools, their use of the Arabic language, and their free intercourse with strangers, the Druses remain even more than the Jews a peculiar people," says a writer.

They are very rarely, if ever, converted; they marry within their own race, and adhere most tenaciously to their traditions, *baffling all efforts to discover their cherished secrets.* Yet neither are they fanatical nor do they covet proselytes.

In his *Travels in Tartary, Thibet and China*, Huc speaks with great surprise of the extreme tolerance and even outward respect shown by the Thibetans to other religions. A Grand Lama or a " living Buddha," as he calls him, whom the two missionaries met at Choang Lond, near Koum-Boum, certainly had the best of them in good breeding as well as tact and deference to their feelings. The two Frenchmen, however, neither understood nor appreciated the act, since they seemed quite proud of the insult offered by them to the Hobilgan. " We were waiting for him . . . seated on the kang, and *purposely did not rise to receive him*, but merely made him a slight salutation," boasts Huc (vol. ii., pp. 35, 36). The Grand Lama " did not appear disconcerted," though; upon seeing that they as " purposely withheld from him " an invitation to sit down, " he only looked at them surprised," as well he might. A breviary of theirs having attracted his attention, he demanded " permission to examine it," and then carrying it solemnly to his brow, he said, " It is *your* book of prayer; we must always honour and reverence other people's prayers." It was a good lesson, yet they understood it not. We would like to see that Christian missionary who would reverently carry to his brow the Vedas, the Tripitaka, of the Grantha, and publicly honour

other people's prayers! While the Thibetan "savage," the heathen Hobilgan, was all affability and politeness, the two French "Lamas of Jehovah," as Abbé Huc called his companion and himself, behaved like two uneducated bullies. And to think that they even boast of it in print!

No more than the Druses do the Lamaists seek to make proselytes. Both people have their "schools of magic," those in Thibet being attached to some La-khang (lamaseries), and those among the Druses in the closely-guarded crypts of initiation, no stranger being even allowed inside the buildings. As the Thibetan Hobilgans are the incarnations of Buddha's spirit, so the Druse Akkals—erroneously called "Spiritualists" by some writers—are the incarnations of Hamzeh. Both peoples have a regular system of pass-words and signs of recognition among the neophytes, and we know them to be nearly identical.

In the mystical system of the Druses there are five "Messengers," or interpreters of the "Word of the Supreme Wisdom," who occupy the same position as the five chief Bodhisattvas, or Hobilgans of Thibet, each of whom is the bodily temple of the spirit of one of the five Buddhas. Let us see what can be made known of both classes. The names of the five principal Druse "Messengers," or rather their titles—as these names are generic, in both the Druse and Thibetan hierarchies, and the title passes at the death of each to his successor—are:

1. Hamzeh,[1] or El Hamma (Spiritual Wisdom), considered as the Messiah, through whom speaks Incarnate Wisdom.

2. Ismail-Ti-meami (the Universal Soul). He prepares the Druses before their initiation to receive "Wisdom."

[1] Very curiously the Druses identify their Hamzeh with Hemsa, the Prophet Mohammed's uncle, who, they say, tired of the world and its deceitful temptations, simulated death at the battle of Dhod, A.D. 625, and retired to the fastnesses of a great mountain in Central Asia, where he became a saint. He *never* died in spirit. When several centuries after that he appeared among them it was in his second spiritual body, and when their Messiah had, after founding the Brotherhood, disappeared, Se-lama and Boha-eddin were the only ones to know the retreat of their Master. They alone knew the bodies into which he went on successively reincarnating himself, as he is not permitted to die until the return of the Highest Messenger, the last one of the ten avatars. He alone—the now invisible but expected one—stands higher than Hamzeh. But it is not, as erroneously believed, "El Hakem," the Fatimite Caliph of bad name.

3. Mohammed (the Word). His duty is to watch over the behaviour and necessities of the brethren ; a kind of bishop.

4. Se-lama (the Preceding), called the " Right Wing."

5. Mokshatana, Boha-eddin (the Following), named the " Left Wing."

These last are both messengers between Hamzeh and the Brotherhood. Above these *living mediators who remain* ever unknown to all but the chief Akkals, stand the ten incarnates of the 'Supreme Wisdom,' the last of whom is to return at the end of the cycle, which is fast approaching, though no one but El Hamma knows the day—that last " Messenger," in accordance with the cyclic recurrences of events, being also the first who came with Hamzeh, hence Boha-eddin. The names of the Druse incarnations are Ali A-llal, who appeared in India (Kabir, we believe) ; Albar, in Persia ; Alya, in Yemen ; Moill and Kahim, in Eastern Africa ; Moessa and Had-di, in Central Asia ; Albou and Manssour, in China ; and Budea, that is Boha-eddin,[1] in Tartary, whence he came and whither he returned. This last one, some say, was *dual-sexed* on earth. Having entered into El Hakim—the Caliph, a monster of wickedness—he caused him to be assassinated, and then sent Hamsa to preach and to found the Brotherhood of Lebanon. El Hakim, then, is but a mask. It is Budea, i.e. Boha-eddin, they expect ! [2]

And now for the lamaic hierachy. Of the living, or incarnate, Buddhas, there are five also, the chief of whom is Dalai, or rather, Talay, Lama—from *tale,* " ocean " or " sea " ; he being called " Ocean of Wisdom." Above him, as above Hamzeh, there is but the " Supreme Wisdom," the abstract principle from which emanated the five Buddhas—Maitrei-Buddha (the last Bodhisattva or Vishnu in the

[1] One of the names of Minerva, Goddess of Wisdom, was Budea.

[2] In the Druse system there is no room for a personal deity, unless a portion of the divine impersonal and abstract wisdom incarnates itself in a mortal man. The deific principle with them is the essence of Life, the All, and as impersonal as the Parabraham of the Vedantins, or the Nirvana state of the Buddhists—ever invisible, all-pervading and incomprehensible, to be known but by occasional incarnations of the spirit in human form. These ten incarnations or human avatars, as above specified, are called the " Temples of Ti-meam " (Universal Spirit).

Kalki Avatar), the tenth "Messenger" expected on earth, included. But this will be *the* One Wisdom, and will incarnate itself in the whole humanity collectively, not in a single individual. But of this mystery no more at present. These five Hobilgans are distributed to the following order :—

1. Talay-Lama, of Lha-ssa, the incarnation of the "spiritual, passive" wisdom, which proceeds from Gautama or Siddhartha Buddha, or Fo.
2. Bande-cha-an Rem-boo-tchi, at Djashi-Loombo. He is "the *active* earthly wisdom."
3. Sa-deha-fo, or the "Mouthpiece of Buddha," otherwise the "Word," at Ssamboo.
4. Khi-sson-Tamba, the "Precursor" (of Buddha) at the Grand Kooren.
5. Tchang-Zya-Fo-lang, in the Altai Mountains. He is called the "Successor" (of Buddha).

The Shaberons are one degree lower. They, like the chief Akkals of the Druses, are the *Initiates* of the Great Wisdom, or Buddh, esoteric religion. This double list of the "five" shows great similarity at least between the polity of the two systems. The reader must bear in mind that they have sprung into their present *visible* conditions nearly at the same time. It was from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries that modern Lamaism evolved its ritual and popular religion, which serves the Hobilgans and Shaberons as a blind, even against the average Chinamen and Thibetan. It was in the eleventh century that Hamzeh founded the Brotherhood of Lebanon, and till now no one has acquired its secrets!

It is supremely strange that both the Lamas and the Druses should have the same mystical statistics. They reckon the bulk of the human race at 1,332,000,000. When good and evil, they say, will come to an equilibrium in the scales of human actions (now evil is far the heavier), then the breath of "Wisdom" will annihilate in the wink of an eye just 666,000,000 of men. The surviving 666,000,000 will have "Supreme Wisdom" incarnated in them.[1] This may

[1] The Hindus have the same belief. In the Deva-Yuga they will all be Devs or Gods. See *Lamanim-tshen-po*, or *Great Road to Perfection*, a work of the fifteenth century. The author of this book is the great

have and probably has an allegorical meaning. But what relation might it possibly bear to the number of the " beast " of St. John's Revelation ?

If more were known than really is of the religions of Thibet and the Druses, then would scholars see that there is more affinity between Turanian Lamaists and the Semitic " El Hammists," or Druses, than was ever suspected. But all is darkness, conjecture, and mere guesswork whenever the writers speak of either the one or the other. The little that has transpired of their beliefs is generally so disfigured by prejudice and ignorance that no learned Lama or Druse would ever recognize a glimpse of likeness to his faith in these speculative phantasies. Even the profoundly suggestive conclusion to which Godfrey Higgins came (*Celtic Druids*, Part I, p. 101), however true, is but half so. " It is evident," he writes, " that there was a secret science possessed somewhere (by the ancients) which must have been guarded by the most solemn oaths . . . and I cannot help suspecting that there is still a secret doctrine known only in the deep recesses of the crypts of Thibet."

To conclude with the Druses. As Se-lama and Boha-eddin —two names more than suggestive of the words " Lama " and " Buddha "—are the only ones entrusted with the secret of Hamsa's retreat, and having the means of consulting with their Master, they from time to time bring his directions and commands to the Brotherhood ; so even to this day do the Akkals of that name travel every seventh year through Bussora and Persia into Tartary and Thibet to the very west of China, and return at the expiration of the eleventh year, bringing fresh orders from " El Hamma." Owing to the expectation of war between China and Russia, only last year [1] a Druse messenger passed through Bombay on his way to Thibet and Tartary. This would explain the " superstitious " belief that " the souls of all pious Druses are

reformer of Lamaism, the famous Tzong-ka-pa, from whose hair sprang up the famous Koum-boum letter tree, a tree whose leaves all bear sacred Thibetan inscriptions, according to tradition. This tree was seen by Abbé Huc some forty years ago, and was seen last year by the Hungarian traveller Count Szitcheny, who, however (begging his pardon), *could not*, under its physical surroundings, have carried away a branch of it as he pretends to have done.

[1] This was written in 1880.

supposed to be occupying, in large numbers, certain cities in China." It is around the plateau of the Pamirs—they say, with the Biblical scholars—that the cradle of the true race must be located—but the cradle of *initiated* humanity only, of those who have for the first time tasted of the fruit of knowledge, and those are in Thibet, Mongolia, Tartary, China and India, where also the souls of their pious and initiated brethren transmigrate and become "Sons of God." What this language means every theosophist ought to know. They discredit the fable of Adam and Eve, and say that they who first ate of the forbidden fruit, and thus became Elohim, were Enoch or Hermes (the supposed father of Masonry), and Seth Sat'an, the father of secret wisdom and learning, whose abode, they say, is now in the planet Mercury,[1] and whom the Christians were kind enough to convert into a chief devil, the "fallen angel." Their evil one is an abstract principle, and called the "Rival."

The "millions of Chinese Unitarians" may mean Thibetan Lamas, Hindus, and others of the East, as well as Chinamen. It is true that the Druses believe in and expect their resurrection day in Armageddon, which, however, they pronounce otherwise. As the phrase occurs in the Apocalypse it may seem to some that they get the idea from St. John's Revelation. It is nothing of the kind. On that day, which, according to the Druse teaching, will consummate the great spiritual plan, "the bodies of the wise and faithful will be absorbed into the absolute essence, and transformed from the many into the One." This is pre-eminently the Buddhist idea of Nirvana, and that of the Vedantin final absorbtion into Parabraham. Their "Persian Magianism and

[1] Buddha is son of Maya, and (according to the Brahamanic notion) Vishnu; Maia is mother of Mercury by Jupiter. Buddha means the "wise," and Mercury is God of Wisdom (Hermes); and the planet sacred to Gautama Buddha is Mercury; Venus and Isis presided over navigation, as Mary or Maria, the Madonna, presides now. Is not the latter hymned to this day by the Church:

> "Ave maris stella,
> Dei Mater alma."

or

> "Hail, Star of the Sea,
> Dear Mother of God."

—thus identified with Venus?

Gnosticism" makes them regard St. John as Oannes, the Chaldean manfish,[1] hence connects their belief at once with the Indian Vishnu and the Lamaic symbology. Their "Armageddon" is simply "Ramdagon,"[2] and this is how it is explained.

The sentence in Revelation is no better interpreted than so many other things by Christians, while even the non-Kabalistic Jews know nothing of its real meaning. Armageddon is mistaken for a geographical locality—the elevated table of Esdraelon or Ar-mageddon, the mountain of Megiddo, where Gideon triumphed over the Midianites![3] It is an erroneous notion, for the name in the Revelation refers to a mythical place mentioned in one of the most archaic traditions of the heathen East, especially among the Turanian and Semitic races. It is simply a kind of

[1] See "Legend of Jonah" in the Appendix.

[2] Rama, of the solar race, is an incarnation of Vishnu—a Sun-God. In the "Matsya," or first avatar, in order to save humanity from final destruction (see *Vishnu Purana*) that God appears to King Satyavrata and the seven saints who accompany him on the vessel to escape universal deluge, as an enormous fish with one stupendous horn. To this horn the King is commanded by Hari to tie the ship with a serpent (the emblem of eternity) instead of a cable. The Dalai-Lama, besides his name of "Ocean," is also called Sarou, which in Thibetan means the "unicorn" or one-horned. He wears on his head-gear a prominent horn, set over a Yung-dang, or mystic cross, which is the Jain and Hindu Swastika. The "fish" and the *sea or water* are the most archaic emblems of the Messiahs, or incarnations of divine wisdom, among all the ancient peoples. Fishes play a prominent figure on old Christian medals; and in the catacombs of Rome the "Mystic Cross" or "Anchor" stands between two fishes as supporters. Dagh-dae, the name of Zaratushtra's mother, means the "Divine Fish," or Holy Wisdom. The "Mover on the Waters," whether we call him Narayana or Abatur (the Kabalistic Superior Father and "Ancient of the World"), or "Holy Spirit" is all one. According to *Codex Nazaræus, Kabala and Genesis,* the Holy Spirit, when moving on the waters, mirrored himself—and "Adam Kadmon was born." *Mare* in Latin is the sea. Water is associated with *every* creed. Mary and Venus are both patronesses of the sea and of sailors—and both mothers of Gods of Love whether divine or earthly. The mother of Jesus is called Mary or Mariah—the word meaning in Hebrew *mirror*, that in which we find but the reflection instead of a reality, and 600 years before Christianity there was Maya, Buddha's mother, whose name means illusion—identically the same. Another curious "coincidence" is found in the selections of new Dalai-Lamas in Thibet. The new incarnation of Buddha is ascertained by a curious ichthyomancy with three gold fishes. Shutting themselves up in the Buddha-La (temple), the Hobilgans place three gold fishes in an urn, and on one of these ancient emblems of Supreme Wisdom shortly appears the name of the child into whom the soul of the late Dalai-Lama is supposd to have transmigrated.

[3] It is not the "Valley of Megeddo," for there is no such valley known, Dr. Robinson's typographical and Biblical notions being no better than hypotheses.

purgatorial Elysium, in which departed spirits are collected to await the day of final judgment. That it is so is proved by the verses in Revelation: "And he gathered them together into a place called . . . Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air" (xvi. 16, 17). The Druses pronounce the name of that mystical locality "Ramdagon." It is, then, highly probable that the word is an anagram, as shown by the author of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. It means "Rama-Dagon,"[1] the first signifying Sun-God of that name, and the second "Dagon," or the Chaldean Holy Wisdom incarnated in their "Messenger," Oannes, the Man-Fish, and descending on the "Sons of God" or the initiates of whatever country; those, in fact, through whom Deific Wisdom occasionally reveals itself to the world.

[1] Ram is also womb and valley, and in Thibetan "goat"; Dag is fish, from Dagon, the man-fish, or perfect wisdom.

CHAPTER XXV

THE RELATION OF THE DRUSES TO FREEMASONRY

The Rev. Haskett Smith prepared a paper on the relation of the Druses to Freemasonry, which was published in the *Ars Quator Coronatum* of Jan. 2, 1891. In this paper he advanced two propositions:

1. That the Druses are none other than the original subjects of Hiram, King of Tyre, and that their ancestors were the builders of King Solomon's Temple.

2. That, to this very day, the Druses retain many evident tokens of their close and intimate connection with the Ancient Craft of Freemasonry.

In introducing the first proposition Mr. Haskett Smith reminded his audience that "anyone who has the most elementary knowledge of the history of the East is aware that the subjects of Hiram, King of Tyre, were known by the name of Phœnicians. He is also, doubtless, aware that the Phœnicians were the great navigators and merchants of ancient days. They have been compared by many writers to the English; and, indeed, so far as the spirit of enterprise, adventure, commerce, and colonization were concerned, the comparison is by no means inappropriate; but there was another section ot the Phœnician race who were, in every sense, their brethren and kindred in blood and family, their fellow-subjects in the same realm, partakers with them of the same ancestral stock. This other section presented, however, in the features of their daily life and occupation, a diametrical contrast to their more famous brethren. They were a pastoral and agricultural class of peasants, inhabiting the mountain glens and valleys of the Lebanon, dwelling above and undisturbed in the secluded retirement of their village homes. They were brought into

contact with no outsiders ; they had no relations of business or friendship with other races ; and, with one solitary exception in their history, nothing ever occurred to bring their names into notice. The solitary exception was occasioned by the building of Solomon's Temple. Hiram, King of Tyre, sovereign of all Phœnicia, maritime and mountainous, proffered his services to his royal neighbour, and, in the prosecution of his friendly assistance, he commissioned that portion of his subjects who inhabited the rural districts on the Lebanon slopes, to hew down the cedar trees, to fashion the timbers, to quarry the stones, and to perform all the other necessary labours in connection with the undertaking upon which he had embarked. Thus, when we read, either in the pages of the Bible or in the history of the Craft, of the subjects of Hiram, King of Tyre, who assisted in the erection of Solomon's Temple, we must remember that these were principally those Phœnicians who belonged to the agricultural and domestic class. It is true that their brethren of the seaboard had also their share in the work, for it was they who were responsible for the safe transfer of all the materials from the Phœnician ports to Joppa, and from thence to their destination at Jerusalem. But the Craftsmen and Masons themselves were mountaineering Phœnicians, inhabitants of those very districts where, many centuries afterwards, Hamzeh preached his new religion and founded the sacred worship of Drusedom.

"Now I would earnestly draw the attention of the brethren to one cardinal feature of Oriental life. Except under extraordinary and abnormal circumstances—such, for example, as those I have enumerated in connection with the mercantile section of Phœnicia—there is a universal tendency amongst all Eastern tribes to maintain unchanged for centuries upon centuries their habits, customs, race distinctions, and places of abode. Such would especially be the case with an exclusive, retiring, and pastoral peasantry such as the mountaineering subjects of the kings of Phœnicia. Just exactly as the very condition of life under which the navigating Phœnicians lived brought about two results, viz., their fame and prosperity for a time, and their subsequent extinction as a race ; so did the opposite conditions of life

under which their agricultural brethren lived, produce two results, the opposite of these, viz., their obscurity of renown, and their permanence of existence. Long after Phœnicia, as a nation, had become nothing more than an interesting matter of past history to the world in general, this portion of Phœnicia was still maintaining, in unknown seclusion, its integrity of character, race and blood. The downfall of Tyre and Sidon had caused the worship of Baal and Ashteroth to fall into decay, and when Hamzeh came amongst this people he found them practically without a religion. Their rigid exclusiveness of Nature had forbidden them to embrace any religion, such, e.g., as Christianity or Mohammedanism, which would have brought them into communion with the outside world; and one of the chief recommendations of Hamzeh's faith was that it supplied them with a religion which they could have entirely to themselves.

"It is, however, a matter of the most significant note that, though Hamzeh could not detect amongst this people any trace of a sacred religion, in the strictest sense of the word, beyond their vague acceptance of the idea of One God, he nevertheless found the existence amongst them of certain sacred and mystic rites. To these he alludes particularly in his writings. He speaks of their *signs* and *passwords*, of their different degrees of initiation, and of their assemblies within closed doors. These ancient traditional rites and mysteries he appears to have incorporated with his new religion, and some of their phrases, ideas, and sentiments he employs and makes use of as if they were his own.

"I have thus been enabled to trace without, as it seems to me, any missing link, the unbroken continuity between the pastoral subjects of Hiram, King of Tyre, and the Druses of the present day. The historical connection thus established is confirmed in many ways by collateral evidence. Thus, an intimate acquaintance with the inner life of the Druses reveals to one's observing mind many characteristics in regard to them which are just the very ones we should expect to find among the modern representatives of these ancient highlanders. In the first place, *the Druses are essentially a mountaineering, agricultural and pastoral race.* Amongst all their many settlements in the Lebanon, the Hauran,

Palestine, and Syria, there is not, so far as I am aware, a single Druse village in the plain. They are all on mountain heights, perched like eagles' nests on the summit of lofty hills, difficult of access, and implying from their inhabitants the characteristics of highlanders.

"Again, in all my researches—and I have been very diligent in my inquiries in this direction—I have never seen or heard of a Druse who is engaged in manufacturing or commercial pursuits. *They are, without exception, agricultural peasants.*

"We come now to another remarkable point. *The Druses invariably assert with confidence that they were the builders of Solomon's Temple.* I have questioned them again and again upon this matter; with some I have feigned astonishment at their claim, with others I have pretended to dispute its truth, with others again I have adopted an attitude of perfect ignorance on the subject. But by all, I have been met with an assured declaration that their ancestors most undoubtedly built the Temple at Jerusalem. The Druses know very little about the Bible or the history of the ancient Israelites. Most of the prophets and heroes of old, with whose names we have been familiar from childhood, are quite unknown by those people of Syria, but there is one name of ancient Old Testament story that stands out conspicuous in the traditions of the Druses. That one name is Solomon. He is their fabled hero; it is in him that all their legends and wonderful stories concentre; and next to Hakem he occupies the most sacred place in their sanctology.

"All these facts, duly considered and weighed together in conjunction, appear to my mind a satisfactory and conclusive proof of the First Proposition which I have laid before the brethren—that the Druses are the original subjects of Hiram, King of Tyre, and that their ancestors were the builders of Solomon's Temple.

"I come now to the Second Proposition, and shall endeavour to establish with equal, if not with even more convincing clearness, the fact that the Druses present many evident tokens of their intimate connection with the Ancient Craft of Freemasonry.

"And here I may remark, by way of parenthesis, that if it be so we have a very remarkable and overpowering corroboration of the claim which Freemasonry makes to its mystic relation to the builders of the Temple. If it be true, as I have already endeavoured to show, that the Druses assisted to build the Temple, and if it be also true, as I shall now proceed to demonstrate, that the Druses are connected with Mystic Craft, then it follows, as a necessary and logical consequence, that Freemasonry played an important part in the erection of the House of God upon Moriah; if, indeed, it did not actually take its rise in that important and memorable undertaking.

"The arguments which I shall bring forward in support of my second proposition are so numerous and varied that, for the sake of clearness, it is better to distinguish them numerically. (1) It is well known to every brother of the Craft that a three-fold condition is laid down for the eligibility of a candidate to initiation into the mysteries of Freemasonry. This threefold condition is as follows: 'The candidate must be of full age, free-born, and of good report.' In the Book of Testimonies to the Mysteries of the Unity, which contains the principles and code as laid down by Hamzeh, there are enumerated, in like manner, three conditions for the admission of a candidate into the Druse religion. Now, let it be carefully observed, this threefold condition is critically identical in every respect with that for initiation into Freemasonry. It is thus expressed: 'He that believeth in the truths which have been set forth in this book is eligible for admission to the *ranks* (i.e., degrees of initiation), and to take his place in the *secret assemblies* (i.e., the Lodges), provided that he *be of full age, free from servitude, and sound of mind and body.*' I must confess that, when I first read this sentence in the sacred book of the Druses, I was perfectly overwhelmed at what appeared to me so convincing a confirmation of the theory I had formed as to the relation between Freemasonry and the Druses, for it appeared to me that an identity so exact could scarcely be the result of mere coincidence, nor did it seem at all probable that either the Craft could have copied the conditions of the Eastern sect, or the latter have taken their phrase from Freemasonry.

There remained, to my mind, no other alternative than that the two mysteries were co-related.

"(2) I have referred indirectly to the different degrees of initiation which have been customary amongst the Druses from time immemorial. I may here state that they are at least three in number. There are first those who are called 'Jahels' or 'unlearned.' These are Druses who have merely passed through the preliminary stage of initiation in their childhood, which consists of a ceremony of shaving the head and other mystic observances when the boy is about six years old. I may here state that the females go through no forms of initiation, and, though some few are admitted to certain services in their *Khalwehs*, or sacred buildings, yet I can find no proof that any of them really belong to, what we may call, the Inner Craft. Here, then we have, by the way, a trifling parallel to the exclusion of women from the mysteries of Freemasonry, though the matter is so comparatively trivial, regarded as a proof of my present proposition, that I have not thought it worth while to give it a separate paragraph to itself. The first class of Druse initiates, then, of which I have spoken, the Entered Apprentices, as it were, are admitted only to the general assemblies of the Church. They are allowed to wear no distinctive garment, and they can scarcely be discriminated by a casual observer from the ordinary Arab or Syrian of the country. The second class are called 'Akkals,' or 'learned,' and are admitted by some mystic secret rite, the nature of which I have been unable to learn. These correspond, so to speak, to the Fellow-Crafts of Freemasonry, and they form, perhaps, the majority of adult Druses. They wear a white turban round a red tarboosh or fez, and they can be readily distinguished whenever they are met. They are not allowed to smoke, nor drink any intoxicating liquors, and they have many other restrictive customs upon which I cannot enlarge in this paper.

"The third class is that to which the 'Khateebs' or 'priests,' belong, and they correspond to the Master-Masons. Their initiation is, I believe, of a very solemn and mystic character; and inasmuch as they occupy a higher and more sacred position than the others, they have, in their turn,

certain further prescriptions laid upon them. Thus, for example, they may not even drink tea or coffee—nothing, in fact, but water. They are regarded with the utmost reverence and respect by the Druses in general, as being the sacred repositories of the more hidden and mysterious secrets of their faith.

"In addition to these, which constitute the general Orders of Drusedom, just as the three degrees constitute the general Orders of Freemasonry, there are, I believe, in some villages of the Lebanon and Hauran, certain Druses of a higher and more mystic degree, who are known by their brethren as Prophets and Seers; such, for example, as the *Star-Diviner*, as their chief astrologer is called. For the esoteric aspect of Drusedom has much to do with astrology.

"In the main we may say that, so far as regards initiations and degrees, the Druse system is closely allied to Freemasonry.

"(3) We now come to tokens, passwords, and signs. And here let me acknowledge at once that, whatever may be the passwords in vogue among the Druses, they are certainly not words familiar to Freemasons. I have made many attempts to gain the ear of a Druse by words, mysteriously whispered, as a dramatic theatrical aside, solemnly pronounced, or casually uttered when the Druse would be least on his guard, and I have never succeeded in producing the slightest impression. I have rendered them in the original Hebrew dialect, so far as I have been able to give the right accent; I have tried the modern Arabic forms; but always with the same barren result. I can only come to one of two conclusions: either their passwords are different entirely from anything known in modern Freemasonry, or else they employ the ancient Phœnician versions of the words. The latter supposition is quite possible, and if it should prove correct it will be highly interesting and remarkable. Unfortunately, I am not acquainted with the ancient Phœnician language, and, therefore, I have been unable to experiment in this direction.

"But, if the passwords are such as I have been unable to recognize, the case is somewhat otherwise with respect to tokens and signs. Regarding the latter I will mention two

particulars. First, that certain points of fellowship, amounting to five or more among the higher classes of the Druses, are common to the sect or society. This is worthy of reflection amongst the brethren, but the second particular is even more so. Upon one occasion I had to enter upon a bargain with a certain Druse farmer in my village. It was necessary that a formal and binding agreement should be ratified between the farmer and myself. As he could neither read nor write, he suggested that an agreement should be made in the manner customary among the Druses. Not knowing in the least what this form of ratification might be, but being always on the look-out for any new information concerning their customs and ceremonies I readily agreed to the Druse's proposal. Thereupon he brought to me the *Khateeb* of the village and two other Druses as witnesses. The *Khateeb* bade us join hands, and each in turn repeat after him our respective formula of agreement. When it came to the Druse's turn to speak and to make his formal compact with me . . . and as soon as the business was finished he turned to me and asked how and when I had learned the secrets of the Druses. This was one of the first incidents that started me on the scent of the track, which I have since pursued with eager zest, ever accumulating fresh evidence in support of my belief as to the relation of Drusedom with Freemasonry.

" (4) Having spoken of the conditions of initiation, the different degrees, the passwords, signs and tokens of the Druses, I go on to say a few words about their *Khalwehs.* Every Druse village and settlement has its Khalweh, or place of sacred meeting. In common language it might be called the Druse church, but I prefer to entitle it, more accurately, the ' Lodge.' Besides those attached to each village there are Khalwehs to be seen in secluded nooks, amongst the glens, ravines, and dells, on the mountain ranges where the Druses dwell. These are chiefly used for extraordinary occasions and great festivals, and for the gathering together of Druse assemblies from several villages and differing districts. The ordinary Khalweh is invariably situated on the outside of a Druse village, on a plot of ground apart by itself ; and no houses or buildings are allowed to

be erected within a certain distance of it. This is for the purpose of more effectually securing the absolute privacy of their mystic meetings. During the time of meeting, a man is always to be seen stationed on the outside of the Khalweh, and his business is to prevent the approach of any outsider near the place. He is, in fact, the Tyler of the Druse Lodge, whose duty it is to keep off all cowans and intruders from the mysteries of the Craft. I have myself frequently seen the Tyler at his post ; and no Masonic Outer Guard, however faithful and zealous in the discharge of his functions, can outvie the watchful vigilance of a Druse doorkeeper to the house of his religion. This being the case, it is needless for me to say that I have never been able to penetrate into the hidden sanctum of the Khalweh, whilst the brethren of the Druses are assembled in the 'Lodge.' But I have been given to understand by the Druses themselves that at such times they have an Inner Guard duly posted, who bears the same relation to the Masonic official of that name as the outer guard does to the Masonic Tyler.

"(5) I have said that the moral law of the Druses religion is contained in summary in seven articles, of which the first three may be regarded as the chief. What are these three ?

(i) The Belief in One God and in His Eternal Truth.
(ii) The Exercise of Brotherly Love.
(iii) The Practice of Acts of Charity.

In the words of their lawgiver, 'The true belief in the *Truth* of the One God shall take the place of *Prayer ;* the exercise of *Brotherly Love* shall take the place of *Fasting ;* and the practice of daily *acts of Charity* shall take the place of *Almsgiving.*

"Thus the practical religion upon which the Druses' conduct is to be regulated may be summed up in the well-known words 'Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth.'

"Owing to the jealous exclusiveness and inscrutable mystery with which the Druses hedge themselves around, the whole work of inquiry and investigation is attended with the utmost difficulty and discouragement. If, for example, one of the brethren, interested by the facts which I have stated in this paper, were to determine to undertake a

personal pilgrimage to the Druses, and to further examine the matter for himself, I warn him that he would, in all probability, find himself grievously disappointed. It is, indeed, a matter of practical impossibility for a stranger or outsider to learn anything of the secret details of the Druse religious system. It is only after a close and intimate abode amongst them for several years, a familiar intercourse with them in their daily life, engaging in their occupations and pursuits, eating at their meals, sleeping in their houses, sharing in their domestic cares and troubles, sympathizing with them in their personal sorrows and joys, that I have been able, little by little, and here and there, to gather together the various items of my knowledge concerning their inner life. And even now, thoroughly as I am acquainted with them, honestly as they have learned to trust me, cordially as they have cast off all suspicion concerning me, I find it absolutely impracticable to question them openly upon the subject of their creed. Whenever I attempt to broach the matter, I am either met with what I know to be a deliberately false reply, or else the whole subject is adroitly turned, in a manner which a Druse alone could have the skill to adopt.

"It has been suggested to me more than once that an effectual mode of prosecuting my researches to their utmost limit, would be to offer myself as a candidate for initiation into Drusedom. But this again is impossible ; for the Druses have a standard saying of their own ; 'The door is shut ; none can enter in, and none can pass out.' None but the offspring and blood of Druses are eligible for admission to their mystic rites. It is a matter of sheer impossibility to convert a Druse to any other religion, and it is an equal impossibility to be inititated into Drusedom.

"Hence, as they say, 'the door is shut.' The Tyler stands on duty at the outside ; the Inner Guard keeps watch within. The anxious inquirer must still remain in the obscurity and darkness of the outer world ; and all that he can hope for is to catch some passing glimpse of the internal mysteries through some chink in the walls laid bare by the careless indiscretion of a stray remark, or by the interchange of courtesies between a couple of Druses, observed by the anxious glance of unsuspected scrutiny. During the great

outbreak in the Lebanon, in the year 1860, between the Druses and the Maronites, some Druse Khalwehs were forcibly entered, and a few sacred books were captured. Some of these have since been translated and published by Professor De Sacy and others, but they have shed very little light upon the hidden mysteries of the Druse system. They were, after all, but very superficial books; the real records of their secret religion—all of which are, of course, in manuscript alone—are kept in safe custody by the Khateebs themselves, and are never left in the Khalwehs. When one of these shall have been unearthed and published, and not until then, can we hope to have sufficient means at our disposal to investigate thoroughly the Druse mysteries; and, meanwhile, I can but ask that the brethren will accept the results of my research for what they are worth, and that they will consider them an honest—and, I will hope, a not uninteresting—contribution towards the solution of the problem of the origin of Freemasonry."

CHAPTER XXVI

THE YEZIDIS, OR DEVIL-WORSHIPPERS

ANOTHER religious sect to be found in the neighbourhood of the Lebanon is that of the Yezidis, in whom again there is a distinct trace of Persian origin, and who have obtained, more even than the Druses, from certain authors, the reputation of being "Sheitani," or devil-worshippers, and addicted to dark and mysterious rites, which, like those attributed equally to Freemasons in general, have their sole existence in the imaginations of those who are disinclined to look with any favour on secret rites and doctrines of any kind. The Yezidi tribes, while inhabiting chiefly the country round Mosul, have an appreciable number of followers in Syria among their total membership of something like 200,000.

Madam Blavatsky, who claimed to have visited them, says that they are erroneously described as a branch of the Koords. She says,[1] that "they are called and known everywhere as devil-worshippers, and most certainly it is not either through ignorance or mental obscuration that they have set up the worship of and a regular intercommunication with the lowest and most malicious of both elementals and elementaries. They recognize the present wickedness of the chief of the 'black powers'; but, at the same time, they dread his power, and so try to conciliate to themselves his favours. He is in constant quarrel with Allah, they say, but a reconciliation can take place between the two at any day; and those who have shown marks of their disrespect to the 'black one' now may suffer for it at some future time, and thus have both GOD and Devil against them."

[1] *Isis Unveiled*, vol. ii. p. 571.

During their prayer-meetings, they join hands, and form immense rings, with their Sheikh, or an officiating priest, in the middle, who claps his hands, and intones every verse in honour of Sheitan (Satan). Then they whirl, and leap in the air. When the frenzy is at its climax, they often wound and cut themselves with their daggers, occasionally rendering the same service to their next neighbours. But their wounds do not heal and cicatrize as easily as in the case of lamas and holy men; for but too often they fall victims to these self-inflicted wounds. While dancing and flourishing high their daggers without unclasping hands—for this would be considered a sacrilege, and the spell instantly broken—they coax and praise Sheitan, and entreat him to manifest himself in his works by 'miracles.' As their rites are chiefly accomplished by night, they do not fail to obtain manifestations of a varied character, the least of which are enormous globes of fire, which take the shapes of the most uncouth animals.

"Lady Hester Stanhope," continues Madame Blavatsky, "whose name was for many years a power among the Masonic fraternities of the East, is said to have witnessed, personally, several of these Yezidean ceremonies. We (H.P.B. invariably speaks of herself in the plural) were told by an Akkal of the sect of the Druses that after having been present at one of the 'Devil's Masses' of the Yezidis, as they are called, this extraordinary lady, so noted for personal courage and daring bravery, fainted, and notwithstanding her usual Emir's male attire, was recalled to life and health with the greatest difficulty. Personally, we regret to say, all our efforts to witness one of these performances failed."

The Earl of Carnarvon, who visited the Lebanon in 1853, and who was a close observer of all these secret sects, of whose travels and observations there is a most valuable record,[1] formed a different opinion altogether of the doctrines and practices of the Yezidis. He says: "There appears to be among the Yezidis the same adoption of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as is to be found in the Druse theology, the same curious mixture of Christian and Mohammedan ceremonial (quoted from earlier authors by Hyde,[2] and

[1] *Recollections of the Druses of the Lebanon.* London, 1860.
[2] Hyde, *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, pp. 517, 518.

endorsed by himself) as in the case of baptism and circumcision, and a similar, although a much greater, respect for the sun, and for the fire which is his symbol. In some other points an equally curious correspondence of practice might be traced. The rule which forbids the use of pork and sanctions that of wine is the same in each race ; the law which admits women alike to the priesthood among the Yezidis, and to the secret conclaves of the Druse faith, is too singular an exception to Oriental prejudice and custom to be omitted from consideration. The alleged worship of the metal figure of a bird called the ' Malek Taoos ' [1] might find its parallel in the supposed adoration of the calf, as the tales of midnight orgies and unhallowed rites have been often told alike of Yezidi and Druse."

Mr. Layard says that this bird is either a cock or a peacock, and Hyde [2] expressly states that the Evil Principle, whom the Yezidis refuse to curse, or even name, is named by them the Pavlo-Angelus. If then, as seems most probable, the Malek Taoos is a peacock, it is very curious to notice the Druse tradition which assigns to that bird the part of a spiritual and deceiving minister in the temptation and fall of our first parents. M. de Sacy [3] observes in a note on this point that the Druse writers often designate the founders of false creeds by the title of peacocks. If this be so, the analogy between the Malek Taoos, or Peacock of the Yezidi, and Doruzi, or the Calf of the Druse, would repay the attention of Oriental scholars. The only question is, whether it is, like Doruzi, an emblem of reverence or detestation. If indeed, the Yezidi belief be one deprecatory of the Devil, and if, as Mr. Layard intimates, the peacock be symbolic of Satan, who is, in their eyes, only the chief of the rebel angels, then the Malek Taoos would represent the bad rather than the good principle, and so far would be akin to the golden calf of the Druses, and imply also the Persian origin of the sect, and the ancient Persian ideas of Ahurā-Mazda (or Ormuzd) and Ahriman. Mr. Layard was indeed told by the Yezidi chief that the figure was only a symbol, and not an idol ; but he

[1] See Appendix, " Worship of the Peacock."
[2] Hyde, *Rel. Vet. Pers.* p. 518.
[3] *Religion des Druzes*, vol. ii. p. 131.

adds, as from bimself, "it is held in great reverence." [1] These charges of devil-worship, midnight orgies, and unhallowed rites have been equally made concerning the Manicheans, the Gnostics, and the Order of the Templars, and in each case based on equally unproven allegations. The whole charges are probably due to the intolerance of both Christians and Mohammedans to any sect whose minority rendered habits of secrecy essential to its maintenance of nationality and independence. M. de Sacy, one of the highest authorities on the subject, evidently does not believe in the allegation : Niebuhr in his account of the Lebanon is obviously indisposed to give credit to a tale which of itself is little credible ; and Col. Churchill, whose close acquaintance with the people and country gives weight to his opinion, appears to attach very little importance to the common report.

Especially as regards the Druses, those who have really studied their character express opinions quite inconsistent with this serious accusation, which may very fairly be set against the mere hearsay on which it is so evidently founded. For such charges are disproved with difficulty where the nature of the religion itself forbids the production of actual evidence, and the secrecy which inevitably shrouds their proceedings invariably, in the popular mind, weighs against a favourable consideration of the true faith and real practices of the sect under discussion.

The Yezidis are ruled by two Sheikhs, one having the direction of the civil affairs of the tribe, the other presiding over their religious rites, and especially entrusted with the care of their Sanctuary, named after their chief Saint, *Sheikh Adi*, after whom the valley in which they are mostly found is called. Badger, in his *Nestorian Christians*, suggests that this Adi represents the incarnation of a certain *Yezd*, who appeared on earth to instruct the Yezidis in their particular faith, and that the title of Sheikh was given to him by his followers in order to conceal from the Moslems the true signification of his name. The Yezidis very strictly preserve the sanctity of their hierarchy, which includes four orders of Priests—Pirs, Sheikhs, Kawals and Fakirs.

[1] *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. i. p. 298.

These orders are hereditary, and can also be filled by females when they come in the line of succession.

The Pirs, whose number is much less than that of the other Orders, are the most respected, after the Grand Sheikh himself. They are credited with possessing supernatural powers, and pass their lives in a state of great sanctity, without holding any particular offices. The Sheikhs have acquired some education, and fill the office of scribes among the sect. They dress entirely in white, with the exception of a black plume above their turban. They have charge of the tomb of Sheikh Adi, and, like the women who carry out the menial work connected with this care, wear a red and orange girdle as a symbol of their office. The Kawals are the orators and musicians of the sect, and are the most numerous. They travel from village to village instructing the younger members in the doctrines of the sect. The Fakirs are an inferior Order altogether, and are distinguished by their tightly fitting dress of black or brown, reaching to the knees, and their black turban, surmounted by a red kerchief.

According to Menant,[1] the rite of circumcision is practised among the Yezidis, but is not compulsory, like baptism. They only submit to it in order to impose on the Mussulmans. As soon as a child is born, a Kawal enters the tent; the mother makes a pretence of concealing it; as soon as he has found it, he cuts off its hair, and then proceeds to baptize it, by placing it on a plate shaped like a cock, which is then plunged into the sacred basin. This ceremony always takes place in the Sanctuary of Sheikh-Adi if the child is born within any reasonable distance; otherwise, it is performed in the house of the Sheikh, with holy water provided by the Kawals as one of their specific duties.

Badger[2] says that the Yezidis believe in the existence of a supreme being who is the essence of goodness. Some pretend that his name is *Ayid* and that the name of the sect is thus derived. But they never address him in prayer, or offer him any sacrifice, and they appear to shun any reference in conversation to this being whom they adore, and to the attributes they ascribe to him. They equally revere Satan,

[1] *Les Yezidis.*
[2] Badger, *The Nestorians and their Rituals*, vol. i. pp. 125 ff.

though they never pronounce his name, or anything approaching it, and they are most disturbed if it should be casually mentioned by travellers, as many have experienced. They appear therefore to worship both the Good and Evil deities of the ancient Persians, but say, as the latter can sometimes do good, while the former cannot possibly do anything evil, it is the Evil principle that must be conciliated. Their religious ceremonies are all, therefore, more propitiatory than eucharistic, expressing the sentiments of persons fearing some punishment for their faults, rather than returning thanks to God for the benefits they have received.

They believe that Satan is the chief of the fallen angels, and that at present he is suffering punishment for his rebellion against the Deity, but that he still remains powerful, and will one day be restored to the position which he formerly occupied, in the Celestail Hierarchy. At the side of Satan, and immediately below him, in power and might, they speak of seven Archangels, who exercise great influence over the world. These are Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, Ariel, Dedrael, Azrafel, and Shemkeel; and according to them, Christ is also an Angel who took the form of a man. They do not believe that He died upon the Cross, but affirm that He ascended into Heaven, from whence He will return at the Second Coming for which they wait, in common with Christians and Mussulmans.

Their religion, in many respects, resembles that of the Sabeans: like them, they hold the colour blue in aversion; they never use it in their clothing, nor in the decoration of their dwellings. The cleanliness of their dwellings, the frequent ablutions which they practise, and their custom of turning towards the Sun or the Pole Star when worshipping, all have a resemblance to the Sabeans, whom, however, they do not closely follow in everything. They have a great respect for fire, although they do not pay it any particular worship. But they often pass their hands over a flame to purify them, especially over the lamps which are kept alight round the tomb of their Prophet. They are careful never to spit in the fire, for fear of soiling the flame.

The Yezidis believe in the immortality of the soul, and in its transmigration. The world, according to them, has

had anterior successive creations, and we are in the seventieth of these. Each creation ought to last ten thousand years, although they do not seem to possess any idea of how these cycles are accomplished. They hope to return to the world seven years after their death has taken place, in the form of men, horses, dogs or sheep, according to the actions of their former lives, but these are not re-born in human form until after seventy-two years passed in the life beyond, while receiving punishment for their misdeeds. They hold the belief that they have the power of recognizing each other in these different stages of existence, and in proof of this they repeat the following legend. Three young men, travelling from Sindjaz to the tomb of Sheikh Adi, met a boy about seven years of age, who said to them: "I know you well, you are my grandsons." "Maybe they replied, "but can you prove it?" The Sheikh interposed, and told the boy to prove his assertion. He said: "The house which I lived in during my anterior existence is in such and such a place in Sindjaz; it is there still." The description tallied. Then he went on: "I had one prodigal son, your father; for fear that he should dissipate my fortune I buried it in a place which I could find again, and it is there still." By command of the Sheikh, the child conducted the three young men into Sindjaz, went to the spot he had spoken of, took a pick, and without any hesitation unearthed the treasure which he handed over to his grandsons.

This sect possesses an extremely prized sacred book, which was shown, without any reluctance, to both Layard and Badger, who describe it as written in Arabic, without any great appearance of antiquity, and it consists of a poetical rhapsody on the merits and attributes of their saint, Sheikh Adi.

Layard[1] gives the following interesting account of a grand festival of the Yezidis in which he was allowed to participate:—

"Before the cluster of buildings assigned to the people of Semil, in the Valley of Sheikh Adi, is a small white spire, springing from a low edifice, neatly constructed, and, like all the sacred edifices of the Yezidi, kept as pure as repeated

[1] Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. i. p. 289. 2 vols. London, 1849.

coats of whitewash can make it. It is called the Sanctuary of Sheikh Shems, or the Sun ; and is so built, that the first rays of that luminary should, as frequently as possible, fall upon it. Near the door is carved on a slab an invocation to Sheikh Shems ; and one or two more votive tablets, raised by the father of Hussein Bey, and other chiefs of the Yezidis, are built into the walls. The interior, which is a very holy place, is lighted by a very few small lamps. At sunset, as I sat in the alcove in front of the entrance, a herdsman led into a pen, adjoining the building, a drove of white oxen. I asked a Kawal, who was near me, to whom the beasts belonged. ' They are dedicated,' he said, ' to Sheikh Shems, and are never slain except on great festivals, when their flesh is distributed among the poor.' This unexpected answer reminded me that the dedication of the bull to the sun, so generally recognized in the religious systems of the ancients, probably originated in Assyria, and the Yezidis may have unconsciously preserved a myth of their ancestors.

" As the twilight faded, the Fakirs, or lower Orders of priests, dressed in brown garments of coarse cloth, closely fitting to their bodies, and wearing black turbans on their heads, issued from the tomb, each bearing a light in one hand, and a pot of oil, with a bundle of cotton wicks, in the other. They filled and trimmed lamps placed in niches in the walls of the courtyard, and scattered over the buildings on the side of the valley, and even on isolated rocks, and in the hollow trunks of trees. As the priests made their way through the crowd, to perform their task, men and women passed their right hand through the flame, and after rubbing the right eyebrow with the part which had been purified by the sacred element, they devoutly carried it to their lips. Some who bore children in their arms, anointed them in like manner ; whilst others held out their hands to be touched by those who, less fortunate than themselves, could not reach the flame.

" As night advanced, those who had assembled, who must now have amounted to five thousand persons, lighted torches, which they carried with them as they wandered through the forest. Thousands of lights were reflected in

the fountains and streams, glimmered amongst the foliage of the trees, and danced in the distance. As I was gazing on this extraordinary scene, the hum of human voices was suddenly hushed, and a strain, solemn and melancholy, arose from the valley. It resembled some majestic chant which years before I had listened to in the cathedral of a distant land. Music so pathetic and sweet I had never before heard in the East. The voices of men and women were blended in harmony with the soft notes of many flutes. At measured intervals the song was broken by the loud clash of cymbals and tambourines ; and those who were without the precincts of the tomb then joined in the melody. I hastened to the sanctuary, and found Sheikh Nasr, the Religious Sheikh, surrounded by the priests, seated in the inner court. The place was illuminated by torches and lamps, which threw a soft light over the white walls of the tomb and green foliage of the arbour.

" The Sheikhs, in their white turbans and robes, all venerable men with long grey beards, were ranged on one side ; on the opposite, seated on the stones, were about thirty Kawals in their motley dresses of black and white—each performing on a tambourine or flute. Around stood the Fakirs in their dark garments, and the women of the Orders of the priesthood, also arrayed in pure white. No others were admitted within the walls of the court.

" The same slow and solemn strain, occasionally varied in the melody, lasted for nearly an hour ; a part of it was called ' Makam Azerat Esau,' or the Song of the Lord Jesus. It was sung by the Sheikhs, the Kawals, and the women ; and occasionally by those without. I could not catch the words ; nor could I prevail upon any of those present to repeat them to me. They were in Arabic ; and, as few of the Yezidis can speak or pronounce that language, they were not intelligible, even to the experienced ear of the Dragoman from the Vice-Consulate who accompanied me. The tambourines, which were struck simultaneously, only interrupted at intervals the song of the priests. As the time quickened, they broke in more frequently. The chant gradually gave way to a lively melody, which, increasing in measure, was finally lost in a confusion of sounds. The

tambourines were beaten with extraordinary energy; the flutes poured forth a rapid flood of notes; the voices were raised to their highest pitch; the men outside joined in the cry, whilst the women made the rocks resound with their shrill '*Tahlehl.*' The musicians, giving way to the excitement, threw their instruments in the air, and strained their limbs into every contortion, until they fell exhausted to the ground. I never heard a more frightful yell than that which rose in the valley. It was midnight. The time and place were well suited to the occasion; and I gazed with wonder upon the extraordinary scene around me. Thus were probably celebrated, ages ago, the mysterious rites of the Coryhantes, when they met in some consecrated grove. I did not marvel that such wild ceremonies had given rise to those stories of unhallowed rites, and obscene mysteries, which have rendered the name of Yezidi an abomination in the East. Notwithstanding the uncontrollable excitement which appeared to prevail amongst all present, there were no indecent gestures, nor unseemly ceremonies. When the musicians and singers were exhausted, the noise suddenly died away; the various groups resumed their previous cheerfulness, and again wandered through the valley, or seated themselves under the trees. So far from Sheikh Adi being the scene of the orgies attributed to the Yezidis, the whole valley is held sacred; and no acts, such as the Jewish law has declared to be impure, are permitted within the sacred precincts. No other than the High Priest and the chiefs of the sect are buried near the tomb. Many pilgrims take off their shoes on approaching it, and go barefooted as long as they remain in its vicinity.

"Some ceremony took place before I joined the assembly at the tomb, at which no stranger can be present, nor could I learn its nature from the Kawals. Sheikh Nasr gave me to understand that their holy symbol, the Malek Taoos, was then exhibited to the priests, and he declared that, as far as he was concerned, he had no objection to my witnessing the whole of their rites; but that many of the Sheikhs were averse to it, and he did not wish to create any ill feeling in the tribe."

The Yezidis have a tradition that they originally came

from Basrah, and from the country watered by the lower part of the Euphrates; that, after their emigration, they settled first in Syria, and subsequently took possession of the Sindjar hill, and the districts they now inhabit in Kurdistan. This tradition, with the peculiar nature of their tenets and ceremonies, points to a Sabean or Chaldean origin.

There is in them a strange mixture of Sabeanism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, with a tincture of the doctrines of the Gnostics and Manicheans. Sabeanism, however, appears to be the prevailing feature, and it is not improbable that the sect may be a remnant of the ancient Chaldees, who have, at various times, outwardly adopted the forms and tenets of the ruling people to save themselves from persecution and oppression, and have gradually, through ignorance, confounded them with their own belief and mode of worship. This has been the case with the other remarkable sect of the Sabeans, the Mandaites, or Christians of St. John, who still inhabit the banks of the Euphrates and the districts of ancient Susiana.

CHAPTER XXVII

MODERN ARABIAN FREEMASONRY

IN a recent issue of an American Masonic publication[1] some very interesting, and hitherto unpublished, details are given as to the existence of an Order in Masonry which carries on at the present day, in both hemispheres, the ancient and primitive rite as practised amongst the Arabs from time immemorial. Until the commencement of the war, Dr. H. R. Coleman, who introduced into America the "Oriental Order of Pilgrim Knights," was Supreme Chancellor of that Order under Francis Ferdinand Oddi, of Cairo, the Supreme Chief. Dr. Coleman translated the ritual he had found in use among certain Arab tribes while journeying in the Holy Land in 1879 and 1880, when he came into touch with Arab Masonry, and was initiated by a Sheikh in the Cave of Jeremiah near Jerusalem, after proving himself entitled to that honour and privilege.

According to the Arabs, who apparently know nothing of degrees, and who give the ordinary Masonic signs without the due guards to which we are accustomed, King Solomon made Masons of his workmen when he first began preparations for the building of the great Temple. They have a tradition that he made three cubic-length metal squares from the soft iron of a meteorite said to have fallen from heaven at his birth and these were the squares used in the rites, during which he sacrificed a sheep after the old Jewish manner of cutting its throat, severing its body, etc., and instructed his newly made brothers that if they proved false to their vows, the wrath of GOD would visit them with the same penalties. By this method King Solomon was able to preserve harmony among his innumerable workmen.

[1] *Light*, Louisiana, Ky., April 1, 1918.

When the Temple was completed, say the Arabs, King Solomon rewarded all those whom he considered worthy of the name of Mason by permitting them to depart about their business, with power vested in each one to make other Masons, providing they came up to the moral requirements. And this is the manner in which Masonry is propagated among the Arabs to this day. Some of the workmen, they say, went back to tilling the soil as before: others remained artisans: others travelled wheresoever their fancy led them into Egypt, India and Europe. All followed whatever trade they pleased. But all were Masons, and usually fathers made their sons Masons, after raising them up from childhood in preparation for it.

The Arabs hold that King Solomon was the direct founder of Masonry. Dr. Coleman says that they know nothing of the Hiramic legend, nor of King Hiram of Tyre being equally interested with King Solomon in the building of the Temple.

In addition to the signs of the three degrees of modern Masons, they have other signs, and while they could easily recognize our sign of distress, their own is different. And they do not have our "Master's grip." The instruction, or charge, is entirely given by word of mouth, and a sheep of certain size and colour was sacrificed at Dr. Coleman's initiation, according to the ancient ritual, to explain the signs.

The Arabs themselves call this "Masonry." They say that after the Temple was completed many of the workmen and their descendants travelled to the West, every man conferring Masonry at his discretion, and under the ancient charges of King Solomon. In this way it spread throughout Europe, and was not by any means confined to guilds of stone masons, though, naturally, largely appealing to such. For a long time, only those who were true descendants of the workmen on the Temple were permitted to become Masons, but as time went on some noblemen were created Masons that they might protect the Order, and finally others who were not nobles were accepted, and became "free of the Order," hence the present name of Freemasons.

All the primitive forms are still used by the Bedouin Arabs. The father rears his son from infancy as a Mason,

teaching him the laws and doctrines of the Order. But he must be " of full age " before he is made acquainted with the secret work, signs, etc. Dr. Coleman, in his travels amongst the Arabs, found that an Arab Mason is literally ready to lay down his life for a brother, and that the obligations of Masonry are always looked upon as the most sacred ties.

While stopping in Damascus, in 1883, Dr. Coleman was visited by the local Sheikh of the Masons, who informed him that a reception had been arranged for him, and that as Chancellor he was expected to confer the degrees that night on five candidates. Dr. Coleman was afraid that his Arabic would not prove equal to the occasion, so he spoke English while a native lawyer, (the British Consul at the time) stood beside him, and repeated the words in Arabic after him, and when the ceremony of initiation was over the Arab brethren gathered round him, declaring that it was perfect. Two of the candidates that night were direct descendants of Mohammed, he was told.

Dr. Coleman states that Arab Masonry is practically the same as that of the Druses, with the exception that the Druses require an extra obligation from a candidate not born of a Druse mother. He is also of opinion that it was from the Druses the Knights Templar acquired the principles of Freemasonry, or added, more likely, to their own previous knowledge.

It is a mistake to suppose that Arab Masonry is the same as that practised by the Dervishes, to which I devote another chapter. Dr. Coleman says that he knows nothing of the Bektash unless it was organized in Egypt on the foundation of the primitive Arabian rites. Nor are the Sinyuseyeh, a " political " Order of the Arabs, in any way connected with Masonry, so far as he could judge.

Writing on this subject of Arab Masonry, the late John Yarker,[1] under the heading " Benai Ibraham," says: " I am aware, what I have never seen mentioned by any Masonic writer, that among the Moslems, throughout the world, there is a very ancient secret society, which claims to derive from the Koreish, or Guardians of the Kaaba, who were a very superior Arab race, and the descendants of Ishmael, and of

[1] *Arcane Schools*, pp. 183 ff.

which Mohammed was a scion. In the first and second degrees of this system precisely the same assertions are made as in the MS. Constitutions of Masonry, while the third degree is devoted to the erection of the Kaaba by Ibrahim, Ismael and Isaque, as the three presiding G.M.M. Sale, in his *Preliminary Observations* to his translation of the Koran, gives a full account of the legend of the erection by Abraham of a square temple similar to one destroyed in the Deluge, plans of which were ethereally let down from Heaven on the prayer of Adam.

"I am inclined to give credit to the alleged great antiquity of these three degrees of the Sons of Ibrahim, for two reasons, or rather three. In the first place, Mohammed himself confirms the legend in treating of Abraham; in the second place, the thirteenth-century account of the erection on 'Salvation Mount' of the square temple of San Graal, the plans being similarly heaven-designed, is admittedly, by the writer himself, taken from Moslem sources; and, in the third place, I believe, with Ashmole, that the present system of Masonry was a thirteenth-century reform of an older system. In 1872, the late Bro. Mackenzie organized the 'Order of Ishmael,' of thirty-six degrees, the basis of which, he informed me, he received from an Arab in Paris, and in 1884 I was myself in relation with Prince Moustafa ben Ismael, ex-Prime Minister of Tunis, then in Paris. Mackenzie's idea seems to have been that our Biblical legends were the transmission of the 'Order of Ishmael,' of which the 'Sons of Ibraham,' were a very ancient branch, or, as he terms it, the oldest secret society in the world."

M. Edmond Demoulins, in his work *Anglo-Saxon Superiority*, which has created an immense sensation in France, says that in all the oases, or deserts, under Moslem rule Secret Brotherhoods (Zalouahs) exist, and he quotes, in confirmation, M. L. Ponsard, in *Ancient Egypt and Chaldea in Prehistoric Times*. He says: "They have their passwords, their signs of recognition, and are ruled by an official hierarchy, which starts from the Grand Master or Caliph, and ends with such subaltern agents as the messengers, banner-bearers, guards, etc. There are general assemblies for the purpose of receiving instructions from the Caliph,

or for the initiation of fresh members, or again to promote the rising of the population against some interior, or exterior, foe. This variety of patriotism inspired the societies which formerly occupied the two large oases of Assyria and Egypt, at least, during the first part of their history, which extends over the time when, recently issued from the desert, they were still under the more or less domination of the Brotherhoods and Priests of Ammon. Mohammed and his votaries also partook of this species of patriotism, and so did all the societies started under the inspiration of Islam, whether in the Arabian Desert and the Sahara, or at their two extremities from Asia Minor to Spain."

CHAPTER XXVIII

SYRIAN INFLUENCES ON MODERN FREEMASONRY

MASONRY being a "course of ancient hieroglyphic moral instruction, taught agreeably to ancient usages by types, emblems, and allegorical figures," does not present its lessons in either the didactic form of the pedagogue, nor the dogmatic form of the theologian. It presents its lessons in that peculiar form of appealing to the senses which the ancients found most effective, foreshadowing the discoveries of modern psychologists by thousands of years.

This indirect illusive and allusive method was evidently adopted for the purpose of compelling those who received the lessons to use initiative in seeking to apprehend the meanings hidden in the allegories.

No man who has ever received the Masonic degrees will ever forget the physical, mental, and moral contacts in those degrees. If he has given the subject any thought he will remember that the contacts were made in the order given. He will remember that his first sense contact was one of touch, instead of either sight or hearing. He will remember that the mission of the physical senses was explained to him. He will remember that in this explanation his mental faculties were brought into play. He will remember that moral lessons were drawn from his experiences with physical and mental contacts.

It appears to me that Modern Freemasonry has drawn very largely for its rituals on the Stellar Cult, whether in the three Craft degrees culminating in the Royal Arch, the thirty-three degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, the Order of Knights Templar, or many others of great interest and sublime religious teaching which perhaps do not come within the reach of the rank and file of Masonry until some years

after their entrance into it. This Stellar Cult originated in Egypt, long centuries before the Deluge, spread over Asia after that period, was incorporated with Solar worship by the Persian and Chaldean Magians, and has remained, to a very large extent as inherited, among the Syrian sects of the present day. Either through the Phœnicians, from this Magian source, or direct from submerged Atlantis, the undoubted origin of North, Mid, and South American preservation of the Ancient Mysteries from which Masonry derives its existence, the Druids in Britain have handed down to us, as used by them, many landmarks. Already possessed of a certain amount of traditionary Masonic knowledge, the Crusaders, during their sojourning in Syria, came constantly in contact with races further advanced in such knowledge, and influenced by later stages of Persian and Hindu teaching. The ruthless destruction of the Templars, as with all religious sects, failed to root out their doctrines, their rites and ceremonies. These laid dormant, but revived about the fourteenth century, were strengthened in the fifteenth by the Rosicrucian development in Germany, to receive entirely new life in the eighteenth century, when much additional ancient ceremonial, legendary history, and descriptive symbolizing, and moral language were interwoven to form the rituals of the various degrees as we have them in our day.

For any English Mason to assert, and presumably believe, that Freemasonry as we know it is a pure concoction of the seventeenth century shows a most lamentable ignorance, inexplicable when considered in conjunction with the keenness often displayed by such unbelievers in practising rituals which they would have us believe are purely modern inventions, mainly for religious or political purposes, whereas the smallest attempt at research would have surely taught them the certainty of the landmarks, the antiquity of the symbolism, the origin and inner meaning of the ceremonies practised for so many thousand years.

From the preceding chapters, in which I have endeavoured to combine the result of much careful research on the part of many travellers, students, and authors, it will be noticed, as Mr. Haskett Smith pointed out in his paper, that the name

of King Solomon is held in extreme respect by the inhabitants of the Lebanon. Their own traditions, confirming our Bible records, show plainly the important part taken in the erection of that stately and superb edifice, the First Temple at Jerusalem, by Syrian and Phœnician artificers. The Jews were a pastoral people. What more natural, then, than to turn to their neighbours in the Lebanon, left undisturbed there by the express design and command of the God who had led the Israelites to a dominance in Canaan by the extermination of surrounding tribes, for assistance in the provision of materials, and their preparation for, and construction into the Temple of which, as in its predecessor, the Tabernacle, the plans were inspirationally received from the Almighty Architect of the Universe? Details of the classes of these workmen which were found appropriate for facility and perfection in construction are handed down to us in our own Holy Scriptures: in the history compiled by Josephus, the historian from whom we get so much confirmation of Biblical records: in the traditional history of the Druses. Why, therefore, is it to be despised as purely legendary when similar allusion is made in our Masonic ritual? The descendants of the builders of Ammon and of Baalbec showed equal ability in the construction of King Solomon's Temple. Here, engaged in one common work, for years the talk and object of admiration of all surrounding nations, Jewish Unitarian, Syrian Star Worshipper, Phœnician Sun Worshipper, met, and exchanged views, with a resulting effect on the doctrines of the Kabala and the Lebanon.

Before attempting to trace the resemblance between Modern Freemasonry and the preservation of the Ancient Mysteries in the Lebanon, it is well to dwell again briefly on the significance of those Mysteries. We may take it that, while previous to the Atlantean submersion Egypt was the home of the Mysteries, after that period Ancient Chaldea was as much responsible as Egypt for their dissemination and preservation, and that Asia was more responsible than Northern Africa for their progress westward.

The original ceremonies of initiation, few in number, were intended to symbolize the progress of the Human Soul, as outward, visible signs of an inward, spiritual fact. In

other words, initiation was Regeneration, or Re-birth. The candidate himself became the personality symbolized, whether Hermes, Buddha, or Christ, as the human evolved into the divine. But, as time went on, the spiritual became more and more merged in the material. The inner meanings became first clouded, then lost. The Master's Word, formerly in plain evidence, had to be looked for. The Key to all the sciences was so little used that it got hidden from view, and also lost, so that, in time, the door became fast closed, and when succeeding generations of seekers discovered it, overgrown with weeds and rubbish, the key to unlock it promptly was not forthcoming, a new one had to be made, and the various wards necessary wrought in it, one by one.

All the Mysteries, the Lesser and the Greater, the Preliminary and the Advanced, had outer forms and ceremonies which stood for and symbolized the True Mysteries. Just so modern Masonry can never be completely realized in all the magnificence of its inward significance unless the heart of the candidate is opened to receive the impress of what is pictured before his eyes, and the inward soul receives the vibrations transmitted through the tympanum of the ear.

The ceremonies were undoubtedly altered in the course of time, but much of their ancient wisdom and hidden symbolism has survived, and is to be found in modern Masonry, by all who receive true light, as the reward of faithful quest.

One of the most important points of resemblance is, assuredly, the persistence with which the Unitarian doctrines of the Druses, as in Freemasonry, are intermingled with a belief in, and teaching of, the Trinity, showing the common source of origin of both. The Druses invariably like to call themselves Unitarians. Masonry opens its arms the wider to embrace men of all creeds because it is looked upon as distinctly Unitarian in its teaching and beliefs. Yet it is in the Doctrine of the Trinity we are going to trace our first influences of Syrian ritual.

This great Doctrine of the Trinity is much in evidence in the Craft Degrees, still more so in Royal Arch Masonry, more or less concealed or revealed in all other Masonic Degrees directly allied to Masonry, or derived from a common source. In the Lodge, for instance, we have it presented

to us under the symbolism of the three chief officers, the three steps, the three working tools, the three Lesser Lights, and the three Greater, and many other forms which will readily occur to the Masonic mind, without being more explicit here. In the Royal Arch, we have, in addition to these other references the express information that the Triangle refers to the creative, preservative, and annihilative power of the Deity.

Now this Doctrine of the Trinity runs most plainly through the whole of the systems of the Nusairis and the Druses, with traces, of course, in all the other sects mentioned in preceding chapters. The fundamental doctrine is the Mystery of Ain-Mim-Sin, the Archetypal Deity, the Intermediary, the Communicator, and in proof of the antiquity of this belief we are given the names of the Three Great Principals from Adam, Seth and Enoch down to Ali, Mohammed, and Salman al-Farisee. Unitarians as they were, they were compelled to invariably attribute to Supreme Deity a Triplicity, the Maana, the Ism and the Bab—Meaning, Name, Door : the Reality of the Over-shadowing Presence, the Glorious Majesty which enveloped It, the Free Access thereto open to all true believers. It seems, therefore, more reasonable to suppose that it is to this source, rather than to the earlier Egyptian use of the Triangle, and its symbolism of the Trinity, that we owe its constant use in our own rituals. At the same time, when clothed as Masons, we have in our Badges the combination of both Stellar and Solar symbolisms of Deity, the Triangle overlapping the Square, as unmistakable evidence of the incompleteness of the Unity without the Trinity. Again, while in the centre of the Lodge we have the letter G., attributed to the Great Architect of the Universe remaining as the influence of the Stellar worship of the Pole Star, in the situation of the Master and his Wardens we have the influence of the Magians and their Solar worship.

Another of the earliest resemblances to be noticed is in the requisite qualifications of all candidates for Freemasonry. It is expressly laid down in the religious code of the Druses, as drawn up for them by Hamzeh, that there are three conditions for the admission of a candidate into their religious rites. " He that believeth in the truths which have been

set forth in this book is eligible for admission to the ranks (or degrees) of initiation, and to take his place in the secret assemblies (or Lodges), provided that he be of full age, free from servitude, and sound of mind and body."

In the preparation of the candidate for initiation we find full evidences again of the Syrian influences. He has to be barefoot : " Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground," was the command given to our Grand Master Moses, and still rigidly adhered to in the East. But the sanctity of the floor of the Lodge is progressive, like everything else in Masonry. Therefore one foot is bared in the First Degree, another in the Second, both in the Third.

Though an impression may now be given that poverty is symbolized by divesting of clothing, a truer meaning is reached in Operative Masonic ritual, and purity of body is what is implied, if no longer carried out, a cleansing of the body by casting off all previous covering before being clothed with a pure white garment, emblematical of the soul in its final stages of spiritual evolution. Hence the investing the candidate with a pure white badge as his first Masonic clothing. And in certain rituals of undoubted remote derivation it is especially prescribed that, before the ceremonies commence, all taking part are to take a warm bath, put on all fresh and clean underclothing, and put a white garment over all, if they desire, as it may be supposed they do, to secure the highest share in the lofty and soul-inspiring rituals they are about to participate in.

The white robe, and white turban, of the Druse and the Dervish may be now simply replaced by the white apron of the Masonic initiate. But the principle remains the same, the landmark is there still, unmoved, just as the white robes of the Druid Priests are commemorated in the surplices of priests and choristers in every Christian church of to-day, and the more impressive and decorative the vestments which are worn over them, the nearer the resemblance to the elaborate clothing of the Magus or the Hierophant.

Outside every Druse Khalweh, whether permanent structure or mountain cavern or glen, stands a wary sentinel, fully armed, to keep off all intruders, and perfectly prepared

to execute his trust if occasion arise. And the young Mason is reminded that our ancient Brethren were accustomed to meet in these open-air assemblies, where real dangers of intrusion had to be guarded against. I have been present at two open-air Lodges, one held in Knole Park, the other in the grounds of Windsor Castle, and realized then, as never before, the antiquity, as well as the responsibility, of the Tyler's office, as well as the impressiveness of meeting under the open canopy of heaven instead of the usual pictorial representation of the Firmament.

In the Mysteries the candidate was led along as a slave desiring his freedom, by a rope round his neck, and this sacred cord of three threads also implied, in a forcible manner, the protection of the Trinity under whom he entered on his path of instruction. The actual darkness that could be felt, whilst the sun is absent below the horizon, was followed, in an endeavour to drive home grand root principles by sudden impressions on the mind of the candidate which may outlast his natural life, by a sudden emergence into the meridian blaze of full sunlight, in which he could be given his first lessons on the inner meaning of outward symbolism.

In his various progresses round the Lodge the candidate follows the course of the sun, though he no longer exclaims on arriving each time in the south, as did his predecessor in Baalbec, "I copy the example of the sun, and follow his benevolent example."

To gain the desired goal certain steps, he is told, are needed, and amongst these he takes the exact steps which tradition ascribes to Vishnu,[1] at the suggestion of Brahm at the Creation, steps taken by the Brahmin of to-day as they were by his ancestors thousands of years before him.

The Covenant he makes is ratified by an oath for the infringement of which a penalty is orally communicated, without the visible symbolism presented to the Syrian Dervish, of slaying a sheep by cutting its throat across, ripping open the warm carcase, and tearing therefrom the reeking entrails, for purposes of divination.

It will be noticed, in the initiation ceremony of the Nusairis, that the penalties mentioned in case of breach of

[1] See Appendix, "The Three Steps of Vishnu."

faith on the part of the candidate, are very intimately associated with the penalties of various degrees in Craft, Royal Arch, and Mark Masonry. "Wilt thou suffer the cutting off of they head, hands, and feet, and not disclose this august mystery?" "In case he discloses this mystery, will ye bring him to us, so that we may cut him to pieces, and drink his blood?" "Know that the earth will not suffer thee to be buried in it, shouldst thou disclose this mystery." The oath of secrecy, it will be noticed, has to be repeated three times, accompanied by the placing of the hand upon the Summary, the equivalent of our V.S.L.

When light is restored in a Druse Khalweh, the first object on which the candidate's eyes rest is the Volume of the Sacred Law, by which his path of advancement must be guided throughout, if his desire to reach the goal be a genuine one, and enduring. Next he observes the three Magi, stationed in the East, the West and the South, to determine the periods of the Sun's course, synchronizing with the progress of the Pole Star from the North to the Centre, at which point when arrived, it typifies all the Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omni-presence of the Deity Whose All-Seeing Eye and Initial Letter are emblems of the foundation principles underlying every religion, of the union of the learning of East and West, of Magus and Druid.

The North is always occupied by the table of the Secretary, typifying the wisdom of research, in the quarter to which all eyes turned in the Greater Mysteries, when the Circle was completed by the Visiting Presences from a higher plane, therefore left unoccupied by ceremonial officers in every degree with the exception of those extremely high ones in which the Celebrants, after due preparation, themselves become manifestation of such Presences.

It is probably in the two great pillars which are so noticeable in our ritual, even if not always unfortunately in the furniture of our modern Lodges, that we shall find our deepest traces of this Syrian influence, and permanent landmarks. The two pillars which Enoch erected, to escape if possible the coming Deluge which threatened to destroy all existing archives, have stood, through all the ages, as monuments of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, in all ancient temples,

in all mediæval and modern places of worship, to establish, and hold firm for ever the Dual Principle of the Almighty Creator, El Shaddai and Matrona, permeating and uniting the Unity and the Trinity. The Phœnician builders of the Temple were accustomed to see such pillars forming a distinctive and prominent feature of every previous temple they had assisted in erecting, or taken as a model for their own work. Wherever the Sabean architects built, whether in Baalbec or Ammon, Marib or Zimbabgwi, Mexico or Peru, Stonehenge or Thibet, we find their expression of this Dual Principle, and usually in the form of the two pillars, the Male and the Female. They had no scholarly mystic like Arthur Waite in the earliest ages to teach them the real significance of the Way of Divine Union. The Hebrew Prophets, the Arabian Alchemists intended those who read their writings in the inner sense to grasp the true meaning of their symbolical language, for the latter, with the aid of their faithful disciples, have taught us far more with regard to the development of the Soul than ever they can of the transmutation of metals under which their teaching was veiled.

Just as each separate attribute of the Deity had to be expressed as a subsidiary god or goddess, and each phase in the alchemical process was described under a material figure, so the two natures of the One Supreme All-Father could only be expressed as Male and Female. Thus, and thus only, was it possible, apparently, to attempt to express the Creative and Annihilative, the Merciful and the Severe, the Ever-Loving and the All-Just characteristics of Jehovah. The form may vary, from the King and Queen at Stonehenge to the two western towers of St. Paul's, supporting, as in so many other of our great churches, the three doors with which reverent architects of by-gone days always symbolized the Trinity: from the obelisks by which the Persian Magus marked the course of the Sun and the Planets to the Minarets from which the Mussulman Muezzin proclaims the hours of prayer; from the symbolical pass words of the present-day Mason to the actual pillars through which alone he can progress in the highest and most impressive degree practised in this country. Throughout remains the same grand root-principle, the final return to the Centre, to the Point within

the Circle which all have an equal opportunity given them of attaining do they but know it, where each is able to find At-one-ment with the Creator, and there is no longer a need to wear the triangle and the square over the solar plexus, for the Spirit of God is within.

Our ancient brethren had to find, it would seem, some more matter-of-fact derivation to which to ascribe the two Lodge Pillars, hence the totally absurd meaning which the candidate is given, memorials to an ancestor of King David and to an ecclesiastical functionary whose office was non-existent! Instead of the initiate seeing in the Lodge the actual embodiment of the symbolism, far too many of our English Lodges neglect to provide the Pillars as an essential part of their furniture, he is given an absurd reason for their introduction into the ceremony as merely convenient pass-words, and left to discover, in some higher degree, their true significance.

St. John's Day, the Festival of the Summer Solstice, a day so closely connected with Freemasonry in various degrees, shows the influence of the Mandaites, continuing the Solar Worship of their ancestors interwoven with the reverence paid to their Founder, St. John the Baptist, whose name is intimately associated with various points in our rituals. It appealed to the Crusaders, this keeping in mind the Messenger of the Messiah by allotting to his memory the most important day in the solstitial year, when the Sun attained the plenitude of his power. It would naturally follow, in their revival of Druidic rites, this change should be introduced, and St. John's Day be constituted a landmark in Freemasonry in the same way as the Christian Church has for ages perpetuated the Winter Solstice by assigning to it, without any justification whatever but rather the reverse, the Birth of Jesus Christ, which historical and astrological research has pointed out must have taken place at quite a different period of the year. How little does the average devout Christian worshipper, like the average Mason, realize how great an influence on his religion has been the Solar Worship of his forefathers, in its turn replacing the Star Worship of still earlier ancestors. Does it ever cross the mind of the Evangelical Vicar, rigorously condemning

the Eastward Position, that he himself in the North is simply showing more respect for the Pole Star than the Sun as the Visible Emblem of the Almighty Architect of the Universe?

The Royal Arch Degree, the completion of Craft Masonry, is particularly rich in Eastern references. As mentioned earlier in this work, the Chaldean words employed must have been orally transmitted down the ages since the language was in use, as it was totally unknown at the date when the present ritual was compiled and printed. In this degree we have the Syrian combination of the three representatives of the Deity, the four Caliphs, and the twelve Imaums presented in a distinctly Hebrew setting; the Altar in its original position, in the centre of the Lodge, round which the principal ceremonies take place. The Signs, Robes, and whole aspect of the degree are distinctly Eastern, and would be still more so were the Passing of the Veils, and certain other symbolical representations, seen by English Masons as they are carried out in America and elsewhere. A feature of Royal Arch Masonry, closely uniting it with the 18th degree, and forming another of those links which run throughout all degrees in Masonry for those who care to trace a common source of antiquity, is the formation of a presumably complete circle and the almost immediate breaking of it, to admit an extra link in the chain previously forged. Rose Croix Masons will recognize I am alluding to a point in the closing ceremony when the circle already formed is opened to admit the candidate and his guide. In the ancient ceremony of opening and closing a R.A. Chapter, which I should much like to see worked in English Chapters, the circle formed by the Companions is opened to admit the three Principals, and is then, as in the former case, found to be complete. I have vainly endeavoured so far to trace the original signification of this completion of an already formed circle. I can only surmise that it refers, as in another extremely ancient ritual I am acquainted with, to inviting the presence of Visitants from the Unseen World, to assist, as they undoubtedly do, in the completion of the Rite for those who desire to participate in it faithfully.

The "Fire" after the toasts is not explained to the new Companion who is so carefully instructed as to its correct

manipulation. But if he should ever chance to mix with an extremely ancient body of Zoroastrian Sun-Worshippers in this country, he will at once grasp the origin and the significance of this particular association of the circle and the triangle with the central point.

While there is much that is purely Hebrew in modern ceremonial Freemasonry, justifying the contention that it is a survival of Syrian, Phœnician and Chaldean rites, there is much that closely resembles Druidism, intimating that both are derived from a common source.

The Ovade had a gold chain placed around his neck. He was blindfolded, and led in various directions, as in a labyrinth.

Thunder and lightning were counterfeited in the initiation of a Druid. In the original Royal Arch ceremonies, and as still practised in some parts of the United States, the Companions, at a particular point in the ritual, are directed to fire pistols, clash swords, overturn chairs, and roll cannon-balls across the floor, apparently to produce a similar effect.

Just as the Entered Apprentice beholds as a prominent object in the Lodge the Volume of the Sacred Law, so the Hindu candidate is shown the Vedas, and to the Egyptian candidate on his initiation the Hierophant displayed the holy volume of hieroglyphics, which he then restored to its customary safe repository. Similarly, the Ovade was allowed, for the first time, to become acquainted with the written secrets of the Druids, inscribed in characters taught them by Phœnician traders we may presume.

In all the Ancient Mysteries, before an aspirant could claim participation in the higher secrets, he was placed within a pastos, or coffin, and was subjected to a confinement in darkness for a certain time. Remains of such coffin-like cells are found in many Hindu, Egyptian and Druidic temples, being distinctly traceable in many Druidic cromlechs in this country and Brittany. The grand festival of the Druids was on Midsummer Day which, as mentioned above, modern Freemasons have no doubt preserved, together with other Syrian rites, from a Phœnician origin. But the derivation, though undoubtedly from the same original Solar cult, may have been through the Druids.

The processions of the Druids, as of Freemasons, were circular. An ear of corn is a prominent symbol in Masonry, proving that the Order did not confine their intellects, their lessons, and their labours solely to building, but in some degree to agriculture. And the proximity of water is a distinctly Syrian allegorical allusion.

A sprig of acacia is one of the emblems revered by Masons, and answers to the Egyptian lotus, to the myrtle of Eleusis, to the golden bough of Virgil, and to the Druidic mistletoe, "It is curious," says Reade,[1] "that Houzza, which Mahomet esteemed an idol—Houzza so honoured in the Arabian works of Ghatfan, Koreisch, Kananah and Salem—should be simply the acacia. Thence was derived the word Hussa ! in our language, which was probably at first a religious exclamation like the Evohe ! of the Bacchantes."

[1] Winwood Reade, *Veil of Isis.*

CHAPTER XXIX

SYRIAN INFLUENCES ON THE ORDER OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR AND THE ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE

Without in any way desiring or attempting to advance a theory that what we know as Freemasonry has been practised uninterruptedly through the centuries, my contention is that there are sufficient traces in the principal features of our present rituals of their having been derived, and not merely manufactured, as so many would have us believe. And the greatest weight of evidence goes to prove that the Crusaders are largely responsible for European continuation of the Ancient Mysteries, successive courses being built on the foundations laid by Phœnician travellers in much more remote periods of the world's history.

Now the principal religious sect that the Crusaders would come in contact with in their attempts to free the Holy Land from the domination of the Infidels would be the Manicheans, whose doctrines have been mentioned in a previous chapter. After the death of their founder, Manes, there was a fusion of the Order with some of the leading Christian Gnostic sects, thus further intermingling two rich streams of divine wisdom, one coming from Egypt through Palestine, the other from India through Persia. An American Masonic author, Rev. C. H. Vail, has devoted considerable space in his book, *Ancient Mysteries and Modern Masonry,* to this particular point, also dealt with by John Yarker. They show that this particular sect changed its name more than any other body, being known as Paulicians, Cathari, Euchites, Bogomiles, Lollards, Albigenses, but " always a secret society, with degrees, distinguished by signs, tokens, and words, like Freemasonry." [1] The name of the external form was

[1] John Yarker, in "The Kneph," vol. v. No. 4.

ever changing, so we are not surprised to find tradition tracing Freemasonry to the Brotherhood of St. John, to Albigenses, Johannite Christians, or Troubadours and a host of others, all possessing the same mystic tradition, and transmitting their knowledge from age to age. When persecuted under one name, they concealed their Mysteries under another.

Manes, as already pointed out, founded his Order upon a restatement of the old truths of the Mysteries, together with the true Gnosis. He combined the teachings of Zoroaster with those of Jesus, both being aspects of the same Wisdom, but these were regarded as heretical by the established orthodoxy of both religions, and in consequence, while he was slain by the Persians, his disciples similarly suffered death under the Christian persecution they encountered.

The Manicheans, from the fourth century, were bitterly persecuted by the Roman Church ; so were the Templars ; so, to this day, would be Freemasons, if present conditions of opinion and freedom of thought would permit it. Instead the Roman Church has to content itself with placing a ban on Freemasonry whenever and wherever possible, which has in no way prevented its rapid spread and modern vigorous life. And the heartless suppression of the Order of the Temple by the co-operation of Pope Clement V. and King Philip IV of France, the former distrusting the fidelity of the Templars to the papacy, and the latter coveting their possessions, which culminated in the murder of the Grand Master Jacques de Molai, treacherously entrapped with true Jesuitical advances of friendship and sympathy, would seem to have given a fresh impetus, as so often happens, to the very doctrines sought to be thus ruthlessly exterminated. The murder of Jesus Christ by fanatical Jews has given to the World a lasting Gospel of Love and Way of Salvation. The murder of the Templars, by equally fanatical papists, has given us, there seems good reason to believe, the Royal Order of Scotland, as well as the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, which has extended and beautified the teaching of Craft Masonry in every part of the world, while equally preserving for us many of the particular rites of the Templars themselves. For while De Molai was in prison, awaiting

execution at the stake, he is reported to have instituted several Masonic bodies, to keep alive the rites he had presided over, and it was from this source, it is generally agreed by unbiassed authorities, that the Scottish Rite was derived. And although the hopes of the dying Grand Master of a possible ultimate revival of his Order, with all its original wealth and power, were not destined to be fulfilled, it has, none the less, been preserved under other names, in Occult, Hermetic, and Scottish Masonry, linking up, on the one hand, the Operative Masons with whom the Templars were so intimately associated in the building of their churches, preceptories and strongholds, all over Europe, and on the other the Rosicrucian students of Mysticism, many of whom attached themselves to the Order of the Strict Observance.

Returning to the influence of the Manicheans on the Crusaders, a very careful and painstaking writer on Masonic traditional history and research, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, thus quotes Reghellina da Schio, a well-known Italian Mason: "In the lifetime of Manes his pupil, Herman, had spread his teaching in Egypt, where the Coptic priests and other Christians mingled it with the Mysteries adopted from the Jews. It was through these same Coptic priests and the Eastern Christians that both the Mysteries of the Children of the Widow, and the Cult of the Great Architect, came to us in consequence of apparently unforeseen events, and it will be seen that it was principally by means of the Crusades that they obtained a secure footing in the West. The Mysteries maintained their existence under the name of the Cult of the Great Architect of the Universe, a name that has its origin in the allegory of Hiram, which represented in the Mysteries 'the unknown GOD, the Eternal.' The long time that elapsed during the war of the Crusades gave them the opportunity of being admitted into all the Mysteries of the Children of the Widow, and those who had been initiated therein imparted them, on their return home, to their pupils in Europe." [1]

German Masonic writers trace the connection of the Manicheans with the Western Brotherhood of St. John, relying on what is known as the *Cologne Record*, whose

[1] Cooper-Oakley, *Hidden Sources of Masonry*, p. 37.

authenticity is, as would be expected, rejected by materialistic Masons, but usually accepted as genuine by the more enlightened and broad-minded Mystics. This record, which is dated 1535, states that a secret society under the name of the Brotherhood of St. John existed before 1440, and since then, and up to 1535, under the title of St. John's Order of Freemasonry, or Masonic Brotherhood. This record contains the following passage: "The Brotherhood, or the Order of Freemason Brothers, bound together according to St. John's holy rules, traces its origin neither from the Templars, nor from any other spiritual or temporal Knightly Order, but it is older than all similar Orders, and has existed in Palestine and Greece, as well as in various parts of the Roman Empire. Before the Crusades our Brotherhood arose, at a time when, in consequence of the strife between the sects teaching Christian morals, a small number of the initiated, entrusted with the true teaching of virtue, and the sensible exposition of the secret teaching—separated themselves from the mass." The value of this testimony, as Vail points out, to the known existence of this secret teaching, is important; whether Masonry received it from the Templars, or from some older organization, is not so important.

The opinions of the leading Freemasons of Germany are thus summed up by their great and reliable authority, Findel[1]:—

"The Grand Lodge of Germany further assumes that, in the Building Fraternities of the Middle Ages, besides their art, a secret science was carried on, the substratum of which was real Christian Mystery, serving as a preparatory or elementary school and stepping-stone to that and the St. John's Masonry, which latter was not a mere system of moral philosophy, but closely allied and connected with this Mystery. It was conceded that the Freemasonry of our days (St. John's Freemasonry), sprang from the Building Fraternities of the Middle Ages, but at the same time asserted that in the early ages there existed a secret society which strove to compass the perfecting of the human race, precisely in the same manner, and employing similar means, as did the Swedish system, which in fact only followed in the wake

[1] Findel, *History of Freemasonry*, pp. 299–310.

of its predecessor, being concealed in the Building Fraternities, so that our society did not arise from them, but made its way through them. The secret science, the Mystery, was very ancient indeed. This Mystery formed the secret of the Higher Degrees of the Rite, which were not merely kept hidden from the rest of the confederation, but also from the members of the inferior degrees of the system itself. This Mystery was fully confirmed by documents which the Grand Lodge of Germany had in its keeping. This secret legend is the same as that of the Carpocratians, which is that Jesus chose some of the Apostles, and confided to them a secret science, which was transmitted afterwards to the priests of the Order of Knights Templar, and through them to the Building Fraternities, down to the present Freemasons of the Swedish Rite. The Swedish system teaches that there have been men of all nations who have worshipped God in spirit and in truth, and, surrounded by idolatry and superstition, have yet preserved their purer faith. Separate from the world, and unknown to it, this Wisdom has been preserved by them, and handed down as a Mystery. In the time of the Jews, they made use of the Essenes, in which sect Jesus was brought up, and spent the greater part of His life.

"Having been instructed by Him in a more perfect knowledge of Holy Things, they had, amid persecution, taught in silence that which was committed to their keeping. At the period of the Saracens and the Crusades they were so greatly oppressed that they must ultimately have sought for protection from without. As fate, however, would have it, seven of them, Syriac Christians, pursued by unbelievers, near Bastrum, were rescued by Knights Templar, and afterwards taken under their protection. When they had lived there for a certain time they begged for permission to dwell with the Canons or Prebendaries of Jerusalem, as the life there agreed better with their own inclinations and habits. This was accorded them, and Andreas Montebarrensis effected a union of these Syrians with the Canons, to whom, out of gratitude, they imparted all their science, and so completely did they make the priests of the Order the depositories of their secrets that they kept and handed them

over to others under certain conditions. Thus, the secret knowledge lived on in the very heart of the Order of Knights Templar until its abolition. The clergy were dispersed with the persecution that ensued, but as the secular arm did not touch them, as it did the Knights, they managed to rescue many of their secret writings, and when the Knights sought refuge in Scotland, they founded a Chapter at Aberdeen, the first Prior of which was Petrus de Bononia. The science was disseminated from this place, but very cautiously, first to Italy, then to the extreme north (Sweden and Russia ?) and France." Here is an opinion on the subject by Cardinal Manning who, no doubt, was speaking as one in full possession of certain records of the Roman Church which are inaccessible to all but the very elect : "As far back as the 12th century, the Lodges of the Guild enjoyed the special protection of the Knights Templar. It is easy to understand, in this way, how the symbolical allusion to Solomon and his Temple might have passed from the Knights into the Masonic formulary. In this way, too, might be explained how, after the suppression of the Order of the Temple, some of the recalcitrant knights, maintaining their influence over the Freemasons, would be able to pervert what hitherto had been a harmless ceremony into an elaborate ritual that should impart some of the errors of the Templars to the initiated."

Some writers on this subject have contended that the Knights Templar could not have continued to exist for nearly 450 years unknown to the outside world. To refute this objection, King says : "Considering how widely the Order has spread it would be a mere absurdity to believe that all its traditions were swept away at one stroke by the suppression of the Templars in 1307." [1]

Stark, described by Gould, although he regarded him as an impostor, as "a student of Gottingen, and a very learned man, an Oriental linguist of great attainments, holding scientific appointments in Paris, St. Petersburg, Wismar, and elsewhere," [2] wrote in reply to a critic, Dr. Biester : "If he had been somewhat better acquainted with

[1] *The Gnostics and their Remains*, p. 399.
[2] *History of Freemasonry*, vol. v. p. 104.

ecclesiastical history, he would have found not only one, but several religious bodies, which under far more violent opposition and persecution than those endured by the Templars have secretly continued to exist for a longer period than four hundred and fifty years." [1]

Other resemblances that will readily occur to the mind of those assisting in the degree of Knights Templar are the two journeys of seven years' symbolical duration, common to all descendants of worshippers of the planetary system: the libations, which form so prominent a feature in the ceremonial rites of the Nusairis: the white cubic stone, referred to in the Dervish initiation ceremony: the cock taken as a symbol, like the peacocks of the Yezidis: and the peculiar penalty, strongly reminiscent of the Saracens.

In the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, I only propose to allude to the degrees worked in this country, the 18th and the 30th, the intermediate degrees, though interesting in their teaching and symbolism, being of quite different construction and derivation. But the 18th degree is full of resemblances to the Mysteries, and would seem to have been handed down to us via the East. It is a most impressive degree, and one always greatly appreciated by those who are privileged to attain to it, allied as it is to true Rosicrucianism, and so very far removed from the modern degree known to the outside world as such. This 18th degree would seem to be derived from an extremely early Christian desire to make use of the symbolism of the Ancient Mysteries under a new aspect, just as every modern Christian Church is, sensibly or insensibly, deliberately or in complete ignorance, similarly preserving the same ceremonial observances. On the ancient foundation of awe-inspiring journeys in the darkness, terrifying encounters with the powers of darkness, and mystical death before finally arising from the tomb of transgression, is built a superstructure of pure Eastern Salutation, hospitable reception with bread and salt into permanent friendship, combined with the Nabathean doctrine of the Saving Grace of the LOGOS. The seven step ladder by which the Eleusinian candidate proceeded from one

[1] Cooper-Oakley, *Traces of a Hidden Tradition in Freemasonry*, p. 86.

stage in his progress to the succeeding one becomes, in this degree, a symbol of that LOGOS, revealed to his view in the glorious closing of this majestic rite, when, after emerging from all the trials of his fortitude in the darkness into the blazing light of the Sanctuary, the initiate finds I.N.R.I. awaiting him at the completion of his seventh step.

Similarly, in the 30th degree, fresh lessons are taught by the symbolism of the seven steps, amongst new surroundings, familiar enough to those acquainted with Chaldean and Syrian history.

Mark Masons can look back with pleasurable pride on the antiquity of their "Marks," the source of which can be so plainly traced in the masons' marks affixed by the ancient Syrian workmen. It seems to have been a regular custom with all ancient workmen in stone to affix a distinguishing mark, to certify for all time the handiwork of the particular artificer, priding himself on his devout and faithful participation in the erection of some stately and superb edifice. And the very form of those marks, as found on the stones of Baalbec or Rhodesia, is closely followed by Mark Masons, in their adaptation of right lines and angles.

The Order of the Secret Monitor, amongst many modern additions, preserves distinctly Eastern forms of salutation, while using more than any other Masonic degree the double triangle, or Seal of Solomon and I venture to think that many a Druse would find much of interest to him in attending a Conclave of this Order, previous to visiting the Faithist Community in Balham at a Sunday evening service! So wide are the ramifications of Freemasonry, and so little known its many connecting links. The Postulant in the Supreme of all Masonic rites, holding aloft a red lamp while crossing the floor of a modern temple, is less exposed to real danger than his ancestor, with a similar lamp bound to his forehead, struggling through the black waters of some awe-inspiring pool in a subterranean chamber in Syria or Greece. But the goal remains the same. In the Craft Degrees we find preserved the inner symbolism of the Mysteries, the passage of the Soul through a mystical death in the materia surroundings of the world to a spiritual resurrection in the

life beyond the grave. In the Royal Arch, the Rending of the Veils shows us an Infant in a Manger. In the Order of Knights Templar we are shown the Empty Tomb of the Risen Christ. Elsewhere, those that seek faithfully are shown effectually the real ending of their Quest, the Presence of God Within.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

NEW YEAR'S EVE CEREMONY AMONG THE MANDAITES

The following interesting account of a New Year's Eve ceremony among the Mandaites, or Followers of John the Baptist, was published in the London *Standard* of October 19, 1894, under the title of

A Prayer Meeting of the Star-Worshippers

Sook-es-Shookh, on the River Euphrates, in the Mesopotamian villayet, though an interesting spot, is not an imposing or attractive place. Like most of the townlets in this part of Asia Minor, it is just a straggling overgrown village ; a few one-storied plastered houses, with flat roofs and narrow doorways, dotted here and there, a number of wattled and mud-daubed huts huddled irregularly about, a *mesjid* of course, a khan or caravanserai, and one or two open spaces with the inevitable refuse and rubbish heaps, where a bazaar or market is held on Fridays. It looks, however, picturesque and peaceful enough as we ride into it in the deepening twilight of a late September evening. The stars are beginning already to twinkle overhead ; but there is still light left to note the strange white-robed figures moving stealthily about in the semi-gloom down by the riverside. Clad in long, snowy garments, reaching nearly to the ground, they pass to and fro near the edge of the water, some wading into midstream, while the sound of a strange salutation exchanged in a strange tongue, *Sood havilakh*, strikes oddly upon the ear, long accustomed to the ordinary salutation, *Salem Alekum*, of the Arab-speaking Moslemin. " *Paderha Sutekh* " (" Their fathers were burned ") cries our Persian *Charvadar* and guide in disgust as he catches a glimpse of their white-robed figures : thus delicately hinting that they are not followers of Islam : and a Jew from Hamadan, who accompanies our party on his way to the tomb of Ezekiel, deliberately spits upon the ground and exclaims in pure Hebrew, " *Obde kokhabim umazaloth* " (" Servants of the stars and planets "). And the Hebrew is not wrong. The forms gathering by the riverside in the twilight are those of Star-worshippers, the last remnants of the famous Magi of ancient Chaldea and their followers, the Babylonian adorers of the host of heaven. To the number of about four thousand in all, they still survive in their Mesopotamian native land, principally along the banks of the Euphrates river, where they form small village communities. They invariably keep their settlements somewhere near a stream, for their religious rites and ceremonies are preceded by frequent bathings and ablutions, and a

rill of flowing water passing near or through their tabernacle or meeting-place is indispensable. Hence this edifice is always raised quite close to the river.

They call themselves Mandaya, Mandaites, possessors of the "word," the "living word"; keep strictly to their own customs and observances, and language, and never intermarry with Moslems, who call them *Sabba, Sabeans.* Their dialect is a remnant of the later Babylonian, and resembles closely the idiom of the Palestinian Talmud, and their liturgy is a compound of fragments of the ancient Chaldean cosmogony, with Gnostic mysticism influenced by later superstitions. They are a quiet and inoffensive people, noted, oddly enough, for the quality of their dairy produce in the villages, and for their skill as metal workers and goldsmiths in the towns where they reside. Their principal settlement is, or was, at Mardin, in the Baghdad district, but there has always been a small community of them at Sook-es-Shookh, on the banks of their favourite stream, the Euphrates.

It happens to be the festival of the Star-worshippers, celebrated on the last day of the year, and known as the *Kanshio Zahlo,* or day of renunciation. This is the eve of the New Year, the great watch-night of the sect, when the annual prayer meeting is held, and a solemn sacrifice made to Avatar Ramo, the Judge of the under world, and Ptahiel his colleague; and the white-robed figures we observe down by the riverside are those of members of the sect making the needful preparations for the prayer meeting and its attendant ceremonies. First they have to erect their *mishkana,* their tabernacle or outdoor temple; for the sect has, strange to say, no permanent house of worship or meeting-place, but raises one previous to their festival, and only just in time for the celebration. And this is what they are now busy doing within a few yards of the water as we ride into the place. The elders in charge of a *Shkando,* or deacon who directs them, are gathering bundles of long reeds and wattles, which they weave quickly and deftly into a sort of basket work. An oblong space is marked out, about 16 feet long and 12 feet broad by stouter reeds, which are driven firmly into the ground close together, and then tied with strong cord. To these the squares of woven reeds and wattles are securely attached forming the outer containing walls of the tabernacle. The side walls run from north to south, and are not more than 7 feet high. Two windows, or rather openings for windows, are left east and west, and space for a door is made on the southern side, so that the priest when entering the edifice has the North Star, the great object of their adoration, immediately facing him. An altar of beaten earth is raised in the centre of the reed-encircled enclosure, and the interstices of the walls well daubed with clay and soft earth, which speedily hardens. On one side of the altar is placed a little furnace of dark earthenware, and on the other side a little handmill, such as is generally used in the East for grinding meal, together with a small quantity of charcoal. Close to the southern wall a circular basin is now excavated in the ground, about 8 feet across, and from the river a short canal, or channel,

is dug, leading to it. Into this the water flows from the stream and soon fills the little reservoir to the brim. Two tiny cabins, or huts, made also of reeds and wicker-work—each just long enough to hold a single person—are then roughly put together, one by the side of the basin of water, the other at the further extremity of the southern wall beyond the entrance. The second of these cabins or huts is sacred to the *Ganzivo*, or high priest of the Star-worshippers, and no layman is allowed to so much as to touch the walls with his hands after it is built and placed in position. The doorway and window openings of the edifice are now hung with white curtains, and long before midnight, the hour at which the prayer meeting commences, the little *Mishkna*, or tabernacle, open to the sky, is finished and ready for the solemnity.

Towards midnight the Star-worshippers, men and women, come slowly down to the *Mishkna* by the riverside. Each, as he or she arrives, enters the tiny wattled hut by the southern wall, disrobes, and bathes in the little circular reservoir; the *tarmido*, or priest, standing by and pronouncing over each the formula: "*Eshmo d'hai Eshmo d'manda hai madkhar elakh*" ("The name of the Living One, the name of the living world, be remembered upon thee.") On emerging from the water each one robes himself or herself in the *rasta*, that is the ceremonial white garments peculiar to the Star-worshippers, consisting of a *sadro*, a long white shirt reaching to the ground, a *nassifo*, or stole, round the neck falling to the knees, a *hiniamo*, or girdle of woollen material, a *gabooa*, square headpiece reaching to the eyebrows, a *shalooal*, or white overmantle, and a *kanzolo*, or turban, wound round the *gabooa* headpiece, of which one end is left hanging down over the shoulder. Peculiar sanctity attaches to the *rasta*, for the garments composing it are those in which every Star-worshipper is buried, and in which he believes he will appear for judgment before the *Avatar* in the nether world, Matherotho. Each one, as soon as he is thus attired crosses to the open space in front of the door of the tabernacle and seats himself upon the ground there, saluting those present with the customary "*Sood havildakh*" ("Blessing be with thee"), and receiving in return the usual reply, "*Assootah d'hai kavilakh*" ("Blessing of the Living One be with thee"). The numbers increase as the hour of the ceremonial comes near, and by midnight there are some twenty rows of these white-robed figures, men and women, ranked in orderly array facing the *Mishkna*, and awaiting in silent expectation the coming of the priests. A couple of *tarmidos*, lamp in hand, guard the entry to the tabernacle and keep their eyes fixed upon the pointers of the Great Bear in the sky above. As soon as these attain the position indicating midnight the priests give a signal by waving the lamps they hold, and in a few moments the clergy of the sect march down in procession. In front are four of the *shkandos*, young deacons, attired in the *rasta*, with the addition of a silk cap or *tagha* under the turban to indicate their rank. Following them come four *tarmidos*, ordained priests, who have undergone the

baptism of the dead. Each wears a gold ring on the little finger of the right hand, and carries a tau-shaped cross of olive wood to show his standing. Behind the *tarmidos* comes the spiritual head of the sect, the *Ganzivro*, a priest elected by his colleagues, who has made complete renunciation of the world, and is regarded as one dead and in the realms of the blessed. He is escorted by four other deacons. One holds aloft the large wooden tau cross, known as the *derashvod zivo*, that symbolizes his religious office, a second bears the sacred scriptures of the Star-worshippers, the *Sidra Rabba*, "the great Order," two-thirds of which form the liturgy of the living, and one-third the ritual of the dead. The third of the deacons carries two live pigeons in a cage, and the last a measure of barley and of sesame seeds. The procession marches through the ranks of the seated worshippers, who bend and kiss the garments of the *Ganzivro* as he passes near them. The *tarmidos* guarding the entrance of the tabernacle draw back the hanging over the doorway, and the priests file in, the deacons and *tarmidos* to right and left, and the *Ganzivro* standing alone in the centre, in front of the earthen altar facing the North Star, "Polaris." The Sacred Book, *Sidra Rabba*, is laid upon the altar, folded back where the liturgy of the living is divided from the ritual of the dead. The high priest takes one of the live pigeons handed to him by a *shkando*, extends his hands towards the Polar Star, upon which he fixes his eyes, and lets the bird fly, calling aloud : "*Bahma d'hai rabba mshabbah zivo kadmaya Elaha Edman Narshi Ebrah*" ("In the name of the Living One blessed be the primitive light, the ancient light, the Divinity self-created"). The words clearly enunciated within are distinctly heard by the worshippers without, and with one accord the white-robed figures rise from their places and prostrate themselves upon the ground towards the North Star, on which they have silently been gazing.

Noiselessly the worshippers resume their seated position on the ground outside. Within the *Mishkna*, or tabernacle, the *Ganzivro* steps on one side and his place is immediately taken by the senior priest, a *tarmido*, who opens the *Sidra Rabba* before him on the altar and begins to read the *Shomshotto*, "confession," of the sect in a modulated chant, his voice rising and falling as he reads ; and ever and anon terminating in a loud and swelling "*mshobbo havi eshmakhyuo manda d'hai*" ("Blessed be Thy Name, O Source of Life"), which the congregation without take up and repeat with bowed heads, their hands covering their eyes. While the reading is in progress two other priests turn and prepare the *Peto elayat*, or high mystery, as they term their Communion. One kindles a charcoal fire in the earthenware stove by the side of the altar, and the other grinds small some of the barley brought by the deacon. He then presses out some oil from the sesame seed, and, mixing the barley meal and oil, prepares a mass of dough, which he kneads and separates into small cakes the size of a two-shilling piece. These are quickly thrust into or on to the oven and baked, the chanting of the liturgy *Shomshotto* still

proceeding with its steady sing-song and response, *Mshobbo havi eshmakhyo* from outside. The fourth of the *tarmidos* now takes the pigeon left in the cage from the *shkando,* or deacon, standing near him, and cuts its throat quickly with a very sharp knife, taking care that no blood is lost. The little cakes are then brought to him by his colleagues ; and still holding the dying pigeon he strains its neck over them in such a way that four drops fall on each one, so as to form the sacred *tau* or cross. Amid the continued reading of the liturgy the cakes are carried round to the worshippers outside by the two principal priests who prepared them, who themselves pop them direct into the mouths of the members with the words, " *Rshimot bereshm d'hai* " (" Marked be thou with the mark of the Living One "). The four deacons inside the *Mishkna* walk round to the rear of the altar and dig a little hole, in which the body of the dead pigeon is then buried. The chanting of the confession is now closed by the officiating *tarmido* and the high priest, the *Ganzivro,* resuming his former place in front of the Sacred Book, begins the recitation of the *Massakhto,* or " renunciation " of the dead, ever directing his prayers towards the North Star, on which the gaze of the worshippers outside continues fixed throughout the whole of the ceremonial observances and prayers. This star is the *Olma d'nhoora !* literally, " the world of light " ; the primitive sun of the Star-worshippers' theogony, the paradise of the elect, and the abode of the pious hereafter. For three hours the reading of the renunciation by the high priest continues, interrupted only ever and anon by the *Mshobbo havi eshmakhyo* (" Blessed be Thy Name ") of the participants seated outside, until towards dawn a loud and ringing " *Ano asborlakh ano asborli ya Avatar* " (" I mind me of Thee, mind Thou of me, O Avatar ") comes from the mouth of the priests, and signalizes the termination of the prayers.

Before the North Star fades in the pale ashen grey of the approaching dawn a sheep, penned overnight near the river, is led into the tabernacle by one of the four *shkandos* for sacrifice to Avatar and his companion deity, Ptahiel. It is a wether, for the Star-worshippers never kill ewes or eat their flesh when killed. The animal is laid upon some reeds, its head west and its tail east, the *Ganzivro* behind it facing the star. He first pours water over his hands, then over his feet, the water being brought to him by a deacon. One of the *tarmidos* takes up a position at his elbow, and places his hand on the *Ganzivro's* shoulder, saying " *Ana shaddakh* " (" I bear witness "). The high priest bends towards the North Star, draws a sharp knife from his left side, and, reciting the formula, " In the name of Alaha, Ptahiel created thee, Hibel Sivo permitted thee, and it is I who slay thee," cuts the sheep's throat from ear to ear, and allows the blood to escape on to the matted reeds upon which the animal is stretched out. The four deacons go outside, wash their hands and feet, then flay the sheep and cut it into as many portions as there are communicants outside. The pieces are now distributed among the worshippers, the priests leave the tabernacle in the same order as they came, and, with a parting benediction from

the *Ganzivro*, "*Assootad d'hai havilakh*" ("The benison of the Living One attend thee"), the prayer-meeting terminates, and the Star-worshippers quietly return to their homes before the crimson sun has time to peep above the horizon.

THE NUSAIRI FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS, OR *MEELAD*

THE festival of Meelad, which commences on the eve of the 25th of December, is one of great merit and solemnity. From the following description of it, from an old MS., given by M. Catafago in the *Journal Asiatique*, February 1848, it would appear to be a very strange blending of Christian and Mohammedan tenets.

"The Lord, the Messiah (may peace be with Him), manifested in that night His birth of the holy, pure, and spotless Virgin Mary, daughter of Amran, of which God has made mention in His holy book, where He praises it in these terms: 'Mary, the daughter of Amran, preserved her virginity intact; we breathed our spirit upon her; she believed in the word of her Lord, gave credence to His books, and was obedient.'

"However, she is none other, in the Mohammedan Dome (period) than Amina, daughter of Wahab, mother of our lord Mohammed. Many of our co-religionists say that she is the same as Fatimah (may peace be with her); they base their assertion on the words which our lord Mohammed addressed to her once, when she entered his presence: 'Come in, O thou who art the mother of thine own father; or, as others say, "Welcome, O thou who art the mother of thine own father."' But the prophet only used this language to her to indicate that she was the mother of the three letters H, that is to say, Hassan, Hussein, and Hohsin.

"As to the mother of our lord Mohammed, she was no other than Amina, daughter of Wahab, who, under the name of Mary, gave birth under the Christian Dome to the lord the Messiah, in the same way that lord Mohammed manifested his birth in his mother Amina, the daughter of Wahab. The proof of what I advance is the recital which my lord and sheikh made to me. He said to me: 'Having betaken myself to my lord, the virtuous Sheikh Abu-il-Hosein Mohammed, son of Ali Al-Djalee, and having questioned him, among other things, about Mary, daughter of Amran, he replied to me that she was the same who, in the Mohammedan period, was called Amina, daughter of Wahab, mother of lord Mohammed (may peace be with him)'. He added that God had spoken of her in His revealed book, in these terms: 'Celebrated is Mary; celebrated is the day in which she separated herself from her family, on the side of the East: she took in secret a veil which belonged not to her parents, and we sent her our spirit under a human form.'

"Our lord El Khaseebee has spoken on the subject of the holy virgin in his poem, which commences with these words: 'The daughter of Amran, Mary, having presented her son to her family, God caused

Him to speak, although He was in His cradle. I am the servant of God, said the child to them ; He will save Me. I am His spirit, whom He has sanctified ; It is He who has created Me, if He will, He can make me live, or make Me die.'

"Besides, God has said in another passage of His holy book : 'We presented Jesus and His mother to the admirations of the universe ; we took them to a place of sojourning, where dwells peace and flows pure water.'

"Our lord El Khaseebee has spoken on the subject of the pure virgin in his poem, which commences with these words : 'In a dwelling where sojourns peace, and flows pure water, Mary brought forth Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Redeemer, whom I love sincerely.' The celestial degrees of Ahmad (this is the name by which Mohammed says He was mentioned in the Gospels), for which I give my soul, are between the letter H and the letter L. The Lord Christ (may peace be with Him) effected His birth through the Virgin, and spake miraculously, as has said our lord in his book : 'He will make His word be heard by men, from the cradle to old age, and will be of the number of the just.'

"Since then the Lord Christ (may peace be with Him) spoke in this night, and manifested Himself in it, it has been sanctified and honoured.

"It is then the duty of the faithful to sanctify and honour this same night as it deserves, and to bless it by prayers addressed to God.

Prayer of the Eve of Christmas.

"Thou shalt say : 'O Lord my God, Thou art the lofty and great One, the Sole, the only One, the Eternal ; Thou has neither been born, nor hast begotten, nor hast Thou any equal. Thou has manifested in this night Thy Name, which is Thy Soul, Thy Veil, Thy Throne, to all creatures as a child, and under human form ; whilst that, with Thee, this same Name is the greatest and most sacred thing of all that is found in Thy kingdom. Thou hast manifested it to men to prove Thine Eternity and Thy Divinity. Thou wilt manifest Thyself to them in the person of Thy demonstration, to recompense those who shall have recognized Thy Divinity at the epoch when Thou calledst to Thy religion, in sacrificing Thyself for their redemption. Most blessed Lord, my God, Who is so great as to be put in comparison with Thee ? Who is so wise as to attain to Thy wisdom ? Who is so merciful as to be as much as Thou art ? Who is so generous as to attain to the same degree of generosity as Thyself ? Thou fillest all creatures with Thy bounty. Thou callest to them by Thy benevolence, Thy periodic manifestations in the turnings (transmigrations) and revolutions. Thy mercy fills those who have been already the object of Thine infinite goodness. I adjure Thee, O Lord, my God, by Thy most great Maana, by Thy great Ism, and by Thine honourable Bab, to increase in us Thy favour ; I adjure Thee, O Lord, by the merits of this night, not to deprive our hearts of Thy knowledge.

After having placed us in Thy right way, grant to us, O Lord, entire mercy, pardon, forgiveness, and indulgence for our sins ; make us hope to meet Thee ; grant us Thy satisfaction, and give us what none other but Thee can give. O Lord our God, suffer us not to be deprived of Thy favour, nor to be subjected to those who would lead us to adore another besides Thee. O Prince of Bees, great Ali, be our aid and refuge.' Here you will make a prostration, praying for thyself and thy brethren that God will hear your wishes and prayers."

THE NUSAIRI FESTIVAL OF *NUROOZ*

THE most important festival kept by the Nusairis is that of *Nurooz* a Persian word for the Vernal Equinox. It is celebrated on the 4th April (Old Style), the first day of the Persian year. It is quite distinct from the popular festivals, in which men, women, and children freely participate, being strictly reserved for initiated adults and is usually held in a private house, lent by some prominent member of the sect. Makrisi mentions this festival as kept by the Fatimite Caliphs, and calls it the *Nurooz-il-Kubtee*, or Copt. But if it is the same as the same festival as is kept by the Copts of to-day, Lane (*Modern Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 268) says that it is kept as their New Year's Day, on the 10th or 11th of September. Makrisi goes on to say that the *Nurooz* was first kept by Djamsheed, one of the early Persian kings. It was reputed to be the day on which King Solomon's ring was restored to him, and the birds brought water in their beaks, and sprinkled it before him ; hence the Persian kings used to keep it as a festival, with sprinkling of water. M. Catafago (*Journal Asiatique*, February 1848, p. 154) speaks of it as a very holy and solemn day. Quoting from an old Arab MS. in his possession, he says that " the kings of the line of Chosroes sanctified this day, and recognized its excellence. They carried on this day crowns of myrtle and chrysanthemums, and celebrated the ceremony of sprinkling with water. They regarded this day as fruitful in great blessing."

MOHAMMEDAN FESTIVAL OF *MOHURRAM*

(SIMPSON : *The Jonah Legend*, p. 30. London, 1899.)

ANOTHER religious rite, which is still practised in own our day, as a dramatic performance, is that of the *Mohurram* of the Shia Mohammedans. The Persians are Shias, and every year this celebration takes place in almost every town ; and it is also performed in most of the Mohammedan towns in India. In Persia there are regular erections, known as Imambarrahs, which I suppose might be called theatres, for these dramatic exhibitions. The subject of the piece is the martyrdom of Hassan and Hussein, the sons of Ali. Their death is represented, and in India the performers carry richly adorned *Tabuts*, or biers, supposed to be the coffins of the martyrs. At Bombay the ceremony ends by throwing the *Tabuts* into the sea ; but at inland places they are buried.

This ceremony is so unlike anything in Mohammed's teaching, it might even be affirmed that it is entirely antagonistic to the spirit of Islamism—it becomes difficult to account for its origin; and up to the present I have not chanced to come upon any explanation as to the source from which the Shias derived it. The whole performance has the appearance of being a descendant from some ceremony such as the weeping for Adonis or Tammuz, or it might be from the wailing for the death of Dionysius.

LAMENTATIONS FOR ADONIS

(SIMPSON: *The Jonah Legend*, p. 82. London, 1899.)

THE wailing for Tammuz was acted every year; and Professor Sayce seems to believe that there was another feast, "in which grief gave place to joy at his restoration to life,"[1] the same as it was in the case of Adonis. Although nothing definitive can be derived from the Istar myth, it is fortunate that there has turned up among the cuneiform inscriptions an account of an initiatory rite, and one, too, which described the neophyte as passing to the world below. Here is Professor Sayce's explanation of it. He says it is a "tablet which described the initiation of an Augur," that is, a soothsayer or prophet, one who foretells the future—the exact character is of some importance to bear in mind, as will be seen further on. The inscription states "how he must be of pure lineage, unblemished in hand and foot," and speaks thus of the vision which is revealed to him before he is "initiated and instructed in the presence of Samas and Rimmon in the use of the book and stylus" by "the scribe, the instructed one, who keeps the oracle of the great gods"; he is made to descend into an artificial imitation of the lower world, and there beholds "the altars amid the waters, the treasures of Anu, Bel, and Ea, the tablets of the gods, the delivering of the oracle of heaven and earth, and the cedar-tree, the beloved of the great gods, which their hand has caused to grow!"[2] It should be noted here that there was an "artificial imitation of the lower world," that with the cedar-tree, the altars, etc., would imply the existences of a large amount of what, in theatrical phrase, is known as "properties."

This rite in the country of the Two Rivers may have been Semitic or Accadian in its first origin. There are many passages in the Old Testament that are suggestive of initiation, and some of them will be here referred to. The Semites, we know, had the one initiatory rite known among the Jews as the Covenant of Abraham. The history of the Semites covers a long period of time, and it also spreads itself over a considerable space of ground, and that might imply more than one initiatory system, the Jonah legend being at least one of them. The system of becoming Nazarites existed before the time of Moses. John the Baptist was a Nazarite, whose name connects him with

[1] Simpson refers to Hibbert Lectures, p. 231.
[2] Ibid. p. 240.

the origin of the Christian initiatory rite. There were the Essenes, who had more than one degree; and Josephus tells us something about their system and the initiations belonging to it, but it is very doubtful if he knew much about their rites. They were ascetics of a very rigid kind. The same may be said of the Ebionites, but our knowledge regarding them also is of the slightest.

DISCUSSION ON THE REV. HASKETT SMITH'S PAPER ON THE DRUSES OF SYRIA AND THEIR RELATION TO FREEMASONRY

(*Transactions of A.Q.C.*, January 1891.)

Bro. Gould, acting as I.P.M., said: The paper deals with an actual living society, fellowship, class, sect, or whatever noun of multitude may be the most applicable to such a body as the Druses of Syria, between which and our own Masonic fraternity there are points of similarity, consisting of secret signs and tokens revealed only to the initiated. The remarks of Bro. Haskett Smith will no doubt receive, as indeed they amply merit, a careful criticism as the discussion proceeds, but I shall address myself a few observations to the brethren, based not so much upon the paper of the evening, as upon the class of papers of which I hope it is destined to be the precursor. . . . The paper of the evening lays before us a couple of propositions, and if we accept the first of them it will carry us a great way towards an agreement with the other one. But I am of opinion that if the present customs of the Druses resemble in any way the present customs of the Freemasons, the origin of the similitude will not be found in the theory or supposition of Bro. Haskett Smith. If points of similarity exist as alleged, and I do not for one instance impeach the good faith of the narrator, though I think it just possible that he may, in certain instances, have been misled by resemblances, more or less fanciful and imaginary—I believe they were *copied by the Druses from the Freemasons, and the greater the analogy between the customs of the two bodies at this day, the more clearly, in my view, does the finger of probability point to modern Masonry as the fount or source whence the usages and traditions were derived*, on which are based the two propositions or conclusions contained in the paper under discussion.

Bro. W. Simpson said: It is, I think, something new to find a traveller looking out for light and knowledge respecting our Craft in Eastern lands (! !). The two propositions are startling, and *would be of great significance in the history of the Craft if they can be sustained.* But I confess I should like some further evidence before accepting them.

Bro. W. Wynn Westcott said he thought that Bro. Haskett Smith's zeal had outrun his discretion. His contention that the builders of the Temple were suddenly produced from a race of simple mountaineers required some faith. It was odd that these Druses, great admirers, as he said they were, of the Royal Solomon, should not appreciate

the reference to the very famous ornaments of the Temple entrance, with which the name of the great Temple King is so closely connected. But then, there have been scoffers who have said that Solomon was a myth of the sun-god, and not a mortal man at all, and that his name consists of the name of the sun in three languages.

Bro. W. H. Rylands said the paper did not carry conviction. He thought the early age at which the candidate began his initiation, when he was neither free nor of mature age, and the fact that the number of degrees extended to four or five instead of three, were weak points in the argument. To attempt to compare the moral teaching of Freemasonry at the present time with the Operative Masonry of the earliest times appeared to him to be an impossibility. We did not know, and probably never should know, what that early Masonry was, or whether there was any moral teaching in it at all.

Bro. Speth said he was not disposed to accept the author's theory, though unwilling to regard it all as an impossibility. He thought that the Druses' tradition that they built the Temple might be due to a *bona fide* reminiscence, a fact handed down from father to sons in all the centuries. But he could not give his adhesion to the second proposition, that to the present day the Druses retain many evident tokens of their intimate connection with the Ancient Craft of Freemasonry.

Bro. E. Macbean, in summing up the paper and the discussion, regretted his inability to accept as decisive any one of the conclusions which the writer of the paper formulated. The similarities he noticed were no more striking than can be observed, with even greater clearness, in many other directions, widely scattered over the Orient. He could not trace any closer resemblance between Druse ceremonial, and modern Freemasonry than could be easily discovered between almost any other of the mystic societies which have various degrees of knowledge, and correspondingly higher observances with each grade. The different cults always marked the advancement of the neophyte by definite instruction and special secrets, and Oriental religions were still closely allied with peculiar modes of recognition. In Scottish Freemasonry he found a certain custom which was identical with a very ancient Brahminical token, and another which had so strong a likeness to an Indian practice that he had seen a *bright* Mason startled into impropriety.

(Apparently Bro. Macbean had inherited some of the characteristics attributed to Balaam, and in his attempts to refute the propositions of Bro. Haskett Smith acted as a powerful exponent of the "universality of the science," which, after all, was a reason for the compilation of the paper.)

FAITH HEALING AMONG THE DRUSES

(Chasseaud : *The Druses of the Lebanon*, p. 380.)

The Druses are not a people who can lay claim to any very extensive acquaintance with the art of healing. In this respect they must be

considered behind the age. Their methods of cure are of the most simple description, and there are no medicines to be found among them but such as are in common use among all native-born Syrians. In surgery, however, they are by no means incapable practitioners, and their performances in this respect have often elicited the wonder and admiration of those who prided themselves upon superior education and more extensive experience.

A story is related in Beyrout which, however much it may excite surprise or incredulity, is nevertheless perfectly true. In 1887, when the great earthquake shook Sidon, the wife of the French Consular Agent there received some very dangerous fractures. All the European doctors in Beyrout and Sidon were called in, and all pronounced that immediate amputation was necessary. The lady, however, refused to undergo the process of amputation ; and perhaps having had too much experience of European doctors to think them infallible, determined to consign herself to the care of a native-born doctor.

This man was renowned for having in his possession medicinal herbs of a most wonderful virtue, which were said to have effected astonishing cures ; and when he was summoned to the lady's bedside he rejected all thoughts of the knife, and merely commenced plastering the injured limbs with his potent herbs ; and all through the illness of his patient he never resorted to anything else but his medicinal herbs and outward applications. In the space of two months, after the lady was consigned to the care of this celebrated *hakeem*, she was so far recovered as to be able to leave her room and walk about without support, and it was not long before the limbs regained their wonted strength and a perfect cure was effected.

THE TWO PILLARS OF NIMROD

(WALPOLE : *The Ansayrii*, vol. i. p. 291.)

" ENTERING the walls of the town of Orfa we mounted the steep hill on which the castle stands. On the wall near the gate by which we entered are carved two twisted snakes and numerous lions ; the interior presents nothing but a confused mass of ruins, save the two fine Corinthian pillars that form, from a distance, such a prominent landmark. The rest are all Mahometan—a mosque, a bath, and other buildings, in bad Saracenic style. The pillars, two in number, on which, according to tradition, the throne of Nimrod rested, stand on rudely-built basements, nor could I find any remnant of a third, or of any building to which they seemed to have belonged. The pillars are, perhaps, seven feet in diameter, but their height does away with all appearance of heaviness : they are built in pieces, and projecting knobs left on each piece. Here and there, likewise, are notches also made for some purpose, probably of building on to the pillar."

TWO PILLARS IN THE CASTLE OF HARAN

(*Ibid.*, p. 314.)

" The walls of the Castle of Haran are much ruined, though what remains is well built: the south gate also is perfect. Over it is an Arabic inscription; it consists of a single arch, perfectly plain: the spring has a little ornamental work on it; the gate itself is square; over the doorway the stones are curious dovetailed; the work well done. There was formerly a tower over the gateway. Pliny lived A.D. 29; his history would have been written, perhaps, in A.D. 70; so his account of Haran at the time may have been correct. But the walls are built of blocks of stone, totally uncemented, though well put together, and solid through their whole thickness. They are defended by towers, some round and some square. The vaulted chambers within are fine and lofty, the roofs of bricks, small, and well put together: these—spite of becoming black with fleas and scratching —I explored; and my research was rewarded by finding two pillars, built into the wall, of great beauty. Small, but well proportioned, of an extremely black, close-grained marble, the capital lotus leaves clustered round the stone. There were several other fluted shafts, but I saw no capitals."

THE TWO PILLARS OF SETH

According to Josephus, " the descendants of Seth invented the wisdom that is concerned with the heavenly bodies, and their orderly arrangement. Having made two pillars, one of brick, the other of stones, on both they described their discoveries." Josephus also quotes Apion as saying that " Moses set up two pillars upon which was a representation of a bark, and the shadow of a man disposed upon it; as if that in the æther He accompanies the sun through this his eternal course." Prescott, in his *History of Peru*, says: " That the two pillars were a means, perhaps, of determining the sun's crossing the line. The Peruvians determined the period of the equinoxes by the help of a solitary pillar placed in the centre of a circle, which was described in the area of the Great Temple, and traversed by a diameter that was drawn from east to west." Lucian tells us that on the top of one of the two pillars which Bacchus set up in the temple at Byblus a man remained for seven days, twice each year, " evidently on the look-out for Noah's ark! "

According to Arabic traditions one of the Pyramids is the tomb of Seth, and John Greaves, the old Oxford astronomer, considers it probable that the Pyramids are the Pillars of Seth, which, according to Josephus, were in the very same place where Manethod placed the Pillars of Thoth, called Siriad. The words of Josephus respecting these pillars are: " They (the children of Seth) were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies and their order. And that their inventions might not be lost

before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam's prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of waters, they made two pillars, the one of brick, the other of stone; they inscribed their discoveries upon both, that, in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone might remain, and exhibit those discoveries to mankind, and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick erected by them. Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day." The place where the Pillars of Seth are said to have stood is called Siriad, which may be taken to mean the place of Anubis, who marked the solstitial or midsummer sun, and it is therefore the region of the abode of the sun. John Greaves also considers Siriad is a name equally appropriate to the site of the Great Pyramid.

JACHIN AND BOAZ

(HEWITT: *Primitive Traditional History*, pp. 220 ff.)

THE Phœnicians worshipped the *Boetyli*, or sun-pillars, the Hebrew Beth-el, called in the North the *Hirmen sol*, or great stone of the sun. These were in Greece the pillars of Hermes, god of the boundary stone *erma*. The two pillars erected in front of Phœnician and Egyptian temples described by Herodotus (ii. 44) were year-pillars of a race who measured the lapse of daily and annual time by the shadows cast by the sun of day, a totally different deity from the southern god of the setting sun, who ruled the primitive year of the solstices. The first of these two pillars, the god Chiun, or the pillar, the Jachin of Solomon's temple, is called in the Septuagint version of Amos v. 26, the god Raiphon, that is, the ape-star, Canopus, the pillar of the south. This was the green or spring pillar of Usof the hunter, the Pole Star god of Orion's year, beginning its solar year in the south at the winter solstice, called Baal Khammam, or Hammam. The second was the golden pillar of Hypsuranos, the brother of Usof, which was in Solomon's temple that of Boaz, or the moving god, who returned from the north to the south between the summer and winter solstice, when human sacrifices were offered him at the close of each year by the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, and at Rhodes and Salamis. Jacob went to Bethlehem (Gen. xxxv. 8–22), where Benjamin, the son of his right hand, was born simultaneously with the death of his mother Rachael. This son of the right-hand was born as the rising sun-god of the worshippers of the Pole Star, now represented by the Sabean Mandaites, who, in worshipping the Pole, turn their faces to the north, and thus have the rising sun of the east, which they worship, on their right hand, and not on their left, like the Haranites, who face southward while worshipping. The Sabean Mandaites, in their annual New Year's service at the autumnal equinox, fix the hour by referring to the position of the Great Bear and the Pole Star, and mark their connection with the sexless gods of the cycle-year

by sacrificing a wether as a substitute for the ram offered on their New Year's day. It was at Bethlehem, according to Jerome (Ep. xix) that the annual sun-festival of the death and re-birth of Tammuz, the year-god Orion, was held.

LEGENDS OF ENOCH

(SIMPSON : *The Jonah Legend*, p. 83. London, 1899.)

WE have only a few fragments that have come down to us about Enoch in the Bible, but these, slight as they are, become suggestive when compared with our late knowledge. The name Enoch means " initiated," or " initiating," and is derived from a word with a similar meaning, including " to imbue," " to train," " to dedicate," and " to consecrate." Like Oannes the Fish-god, Enoch has the reputation of being a great teacher, and of having produced a large number of books. He is credited as having been the inventor of writing, arithmetic, and astronomy. This reputation is, perhaps, of a late date, but these are exactly the attributes—those of the Culture Hero—that would be given to the typical figure of an initiatory system. Now if we suppose that Enoch was such a figure, it explains, in a very simple way, the origin of the well-known legend about him, that he was translated to the other world.

From other sources numerous legends about Enoch are recorded, and Mirkhond, a Mohammedan writer, supplies one that suggests quite another character to the translation of the Patriarch. In this he is called " Edris," the learned ; and when A'zrayil, " the angel of death," came to him, Edris made a request that he wished to see hell, which was granted. After that he desired to behold paradise. On being taken there and seeing everything, after some time A'zrayil wishes to take Edris away from the garden. but Edris, who was aware of the state of affairs, and initiated into secrets, refused to comply, and, taking refuge near a tree, resisted all the invitations of his guide, saying : " Unless the Creator of paradise and of hell removes me, I shall not quit this place." Meanwhile the Almighty—Whose name be exalted—sent an angel to arbitrate between them who, after conversing with A'zrayil, asked Edris, who replied : " Every soul shall taste of death. I have eaten of the poison of the extinction of life, and, according to the edict, ' There is none of you but will go down to it,' I descended to hell ; and, lastly, according to the command of the Most High and Glorious concerning the inhabitants of paradise, ' And they shall not go out from it,' I shall not go out merely because of A'zrayil's words until the Omnipotent Inscrutable One orders me to do so." Then the divine announcement arrived : " By my permission he entered, and by my permission he acted ; leave him alone, for the right is on his side." [1] This reads more like a piece of acting than anything else, and instead of anyone being able to avoid death, the very contrary is declared. Edris here, it is said, went below, and,

[1] Simpson refers to Rauzat-us-Safa, Rehatsek's translation, vol. i. pp. 70–1.

being "initiated into secrets," when he reached paradise he refused to leave, and claimed that he had a right to remain. The correctness of his claim was recognized.

Mirkhond states that the Hebrew name of Edris, or Enoch, was Ekhnuh, and Khunuh; he was born at Manaf, or Memphis, in Egypt, and he was identified by the Arabs with Hermes, who was the same as Thoth.

MOSES' KNOWLEDGE OF ASTRONOMY

(ANON.: *The Canon*, p. 159. London, 1897.)

WE learn from Philo Judæus that Moses was thoroughly well versed in all the learning of the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, and the Greeks, although most of the Fathers declare that the latter people learnt their philosophy from him. All this knowledge was said to be contained in the five books of Moses, and the Ark, Camp, and Tabernacle are the embodiment of the mathematical and astronomical part of it. Besides the account in the Scriptures, the Tabernacle is fully described by Philo, Josephus, and Clement of Alexandria. In recent times Sir William Drummond (*Œdipus Judaicus*, 1811, p. 119) has pointed out all that can be said in a general way as to the cosmic symbolism of the Tabernacle and the Temple. From all these sources it is made evident that this structure was a mystical image of the universe, intended as a shrine for the Deity Whose nature is enigmatically shadowed forth in the Law. If it be open to question whether the measures of the Tabernacle relate to the structure of the universe (Josephus, in his *Antiquities*, Book III, chap. vi, calls them an "imitation of the system of the world"), there can at least be no doubt that the furniture of this mystical shrine is symbolical of the heavenly order. In the Holy Place there stood on the north side a table "like those at Delphi" (Josephus), upon which were placed twelve loaves, arranged in two heaps of six each, typical of the twelve months of the year. And opposite the table, on the south side, stood the golden candlestick, having seven branches, which "carried seven lamps, one by one, in imitation of the planets" (Josephus, Book III, chap. vi), "and the candlestick was set obliquely, like the ecliptic." Philo agrees with this view, and says also: "For the symbols of heaven and earth are placed side by side, as the Holy Scripture shows, the candlestick being the symbol of heaven, and that which is truly called the altar of incense, on which all the fumigatory offerings are made, being emblems of things of earth" (*Life of Moses*, Book III).

DISPUTE BETWEEN ADAM AND MOSES

(*Mischcat-ul-Mas'abih*, vol. i, p. 26.)

ABU-HOREIRA, a companion of Mohammed (whose name, signifying *the father of a cat*, was given him from his attachment to that animal) reported: "The Prophet of God said that Adam and Moses (in the

world of spirits) maintained a debate before God, and Adam got the better of Moses: the latter said, 'Thou art that Adam whom God created by the power of His hand, and breathed into thee from His own spirit, and made the angels bow before thee, and gave thee an habitation in His own paradise; after which, thou threwest man upon the earth, from the fault which thou didst commit.' Adam said: 'Thou art that Moses, whom God selected for His prophecy, and to converse with, and He gave thee twelve tables, in which are explained everything, and God made thee His confidant, and the bearer of His secrets; how long was the Bible written before I was created?' Moses said, 'Forty years.' Then Adam said, 'Didst thou see in the Bible that Adam disobeyed God?' He said, 'Yes.' Adam said, 'Dost thou reproach me on a matter which God wrote in the Bible forty years before creating me?'"

MOSES DID NOT TEACH THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY

(Von Hammer: *History of the Assassins*, p. 39.)

Moses, imbued with the Egyptian policy, and initiated into the mysteries of the sacerdotal colleges, among many other of their institutions, retained this, of not imparting to his people the doctrine of immortality, which, in all probability, remained, as in Egypt, the peculiar privilege of the priestly order. We find no trace of it in the books of the Hebrews, except in the Arabic book of Job, which, in fact, does not belong to them.

ELIAS THE FOUNDER OF THE ESSENES

(Godfrey Higgins: *The Celtic Druids*, p. 164.)

Upon the pedestal of the colossal statue of Elias, under the cupola of St. Peter's, at Rome, is the inscription: *Elias Fundator Ordinis Carmelitarum.* From Elias came the Essenes, and from the Essenes the Carmelites, monks who were in fact Christian Essenes. These people, in the early and middle ages of the Church, retained very little of the character given them by Philo and Josephus. These Essenes, in Egypt, Persia, and other countries, had probably grown into the prevailing adoration of the heavenly bodies, previously to the time of Philo, and when they became converts to Christianity they formed an odd mixture of the two religions.

THE ANCIENT BOOK OF JASHER

(Emmanuel Swedenborg: *True Christian Religion*, p. 279. London, 1876.)

"About seven years ago, as I was calling to mind what Moses had transcribed from the two books called 'The Wars of Jehovah' and 'The Enunciations' (Numbers xxi), there were some angels present who told me that those books were called the Ancient Word, the

historical parts of which were called 'The Wars of Jehovah' and the prophetic parts 'The Enunciations.' They said that that Word is still preserved in heaven, and is in use among the ancients there, who were in possession of it during their abode on earth, as natives of the Land of Canaan, and its confines, as Syria, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Chaldea, Assyria, Egypt, Sidon, Tyre, and Nineveh, the inhabitants of all which kingdoms were in the practice of representative worship, and consequently were skilled in the science of correspondence. The wisdom of those times was derived from that science, and then they enjoyed interior perception and communication with the heavens. Those who were acquainted with the correspondence of that Word were called wise men and intelligent, and in succeeding ages diviners and magi: but as that Word was full of such correspondences as were remotely significant of celestial and spiritual things, and in consequence began to be falsified by many, by the divine providence of the Lord, in process of time it was removed, and another Word written by correspondences less remote was given, which was that delivered by the prophets among the children of Israel. Concerning that Ancient Word, which was in Asia before the Israelitish Word, I am at liberty to state that it is still preserved among the people of Great Tartary. I have conversed with spirits and angels in the Spiritual World who came from that country, and who informed me that they were in possession of the Word, and that they have possessed it from time immemorial: that according to this Word they celebrate their divine worship, and that it consists of more correspondences. They said likewise that it contains the Book of Jasher (mentioned in Joshua x. 12, 15, and 2 Sam. i. 17, 18), and that they are also in possession of the books called 'The Wars of Jehovah' and 'The Enunciations,' mentioned by Moses (Numbers xxi. 14, 15, 27–30): and when I read to them the words which Moses had quoted from these books, they examined whether they were in the original, and found they were; from which circumstances it was evident to me that they are still in possession of the Ancient Word. I have been further informed by the angels that the first chapters of Genesis, which treat of the creation of Adam and Eve, of the Garden of Eden, and of their children and posterity till the Flood, and likewise of Noah and his children, are contained in that word, and so copied from it by Moses." (I have in my own library some fragments of this Book of Jasher, reputed to have been used by Moses in compiling his own books, to which there is a very close resemblance indeed. I have also what purports to be an inspired reproduction of the "Wars of Jehovah," also a most interesting record.)

CLASSIFICATION OF THE TEMPLE WORKMEN

Masonic tradition, confirmed by Biblical and Jewish records, affirms that each operative mason employed at the erection of Solomon's Temple was known and distinguished by a peculiar mark, and this was affixed by him to all details of his workmanship. That no confusion

might arise, owing to the great numbers employed in paying the workmen their wages, they were divided into three classes, according to the degree of professional knowledge possessed by each, Apprentices, Fellowcrafts, and Masters. Each class had particular signs and words entrusted to its members, and different places were assigned for the payment of each at the stated periods. The superior workmen were again divided into three classes: the Harodim, princes, rulers, or provosts, numbering 300; the Menatzchim, overseers, numbering 3,300; and the Ghiblim, or "stone squarers," numbering 80,000. Maundrell says that these latter were inhabitants of Byblus, or Gebail. The Hebrew version of 1 Kings v. 18, translated in our Bible "stone squarers," is *Giblim*, or Giblites; in the Septuagint version it is given as *Bubloi*, Byblus being the Greek name for Gebail.

The names of various members of the Harodim, many of which are given in the Book of Chronicles, are preserved to us in the thirty-three degrees of the A. and A.R.

JEWISH FREEMASONRY IN THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY

(Oliver: *Historical Landmarks of Freemasonry*, pp. 425 *et seq.*)

During the captivity in Babylon, the Jews had practised Freemasonry, and consoled themselves by brotherly communications in regular Lodges, until the appointed time of their deliverance. And those that chose to remain continued to observe their Masonic duties, and for this purpose they had three Colleges, or Grand Lodges: one at Sora, one at Pompeditha, and one at Neharda. (This is confirmed by a rabbinical author, who says: "The tribes which had been carried into captivity to Babylon founded the celebrated fraternity of Neharda, on the Euphrates, for the preservation of traditional knowledge, and its transmission to a selected few, while it was kept secret from the rest of the world. Zerubbabel the prince, Jeshua the priest, and *Esdras the scribe* carried away all the secret knowledge which was so carefully preserved within the closed recesses of this mysterious institution with them to Jerusalem; and they established in the latter city a similar fraternity for the same purpose.")

This mention of Esdras, as the Third Principal, is no doubt the authority for American R.A. Masons substituting his name for that of Haggai the Prophet. It is more usual to ascribe the holding of the resuscitated Grand Lodge to Zerubbabel, Haggai, and Joshua, with Esdras as the scribe, being succeeded in that office by Ezra and Nehemiah, while Daniel, Zachariah, and Malachi are traditionally asserted to have been members of the Lodge, together with Hananiah, Misael, and Azariah.

GNOSTIC EMPHASIS ON "RIGHT" AND "LEFT"

(Box: *Apocalypse of Abraham*, Introduction, p. xix.)

Among the Gnostic features in the text of this book may be reckoned the significant emphasis laid upon "right" and "left" in the

apocalyptic representation, the "right" side being the source of purity and light, the "left" that of impurity and darkness. This idea is ancient, depending on the dualism which insists upon the category of light and darkness, and can be traced back to ancient Zoroastrianism. But it was developed, according to Irenæus, in the early Gnostic systems, and in the Jewish Kabala, where "right side" and "left side" become technical terms. In the Emanistic system of the Zohar, the whole world is divided between "right" and "left," where pure and impure powers respectively operate, on the right side the Holy One and His powers, on the left the serpent Sammael and his powers.

THE SPIRIT OF GNOSTICISM

(HECKETHORN: *Secret Societies*, vol. i, p. 96.)

THE widely opposite ideas of polytheism, pantheism, monotheism, the philosophical systems of Plato, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, together with the mysticism and demonology that after the Jewish captivity created the Cabbal—all these went towards forming Gnosticism. And the aristocracy of mind, powerful and numerous as none had ever been before, that arose in the first centuries of our era, even when adopting the new faith, could not but loathe the thought of sharing it completely with the crowd of freed and unfreed slaves around them —with the low and poor in spirit. The exclusiveness of Gnosticism, which was one of the causes why it was violently persecuted by the Fathers of the Church, as damnable heresy, was undoubtedly, next to the attractiveness of its dogmas, one of the chief reasons of its rapid propagation, and its lasting influence on modern religious systems.

PORPHYRY

(*The Egyptian Mysteries by Iamblichus*. Note by Dr. A. WILDER, the translator and annotator.)

PORPHYRY was a distinguished scholar, and the foremost writer in the later Platonic School. He was a native of Tyre, and his name, Molech, of King, was rendered by Longinus into *Porphurios*, denoting the royal purple, as a proper equivalent. He was a disciple of Plotinus, who had broadened the field of philosophic study till it included the "Wisdom of the East." In personal habits he followed the Pythagorean discipline. He was a severe critic of the Gnostic beliefs then current, and he evidently included with them also the new Christian faith. His mysticism was spiritual and contemplative, and he regarded the ceremonial rites of the Egyptian theurgy with distrust. He favoured Mythraism, which prevailed in Asia, while Iamblichus belonged rather to the cult of Serapis, which was the State religion of Egypt. In this work by Iamblichus, Porphyry, himself an "Epoptes," or initiated person, asks Anebo, an Egyptian priest, a "Prophet," or expounder

of the oracles of which he was a servant, to explain the Egyptian theosophical doctrines, which he specifies, respecting the Divine Being, rites, and religious faith; which explanation is fully made by Abammon the Teacher.

MANES MEANS COMFORTER

(TAYLOR'S *History of Mohammedanism*, p. 101.)

IT was long disputed among the learned, why the great Persian heresiarch assumed the name of Mani or Manes, and why his followers asserted that this name proved him to be the promised Comforter. Archbishop Usher has completely explained both difficulties, though the circumstances seems not to be generally known; he has shown that Mani in Persian, and Manes in Greek, is precisely the same as the Hebrew Meneham, or rather Menachem, "a Comforter." This also explains the reason why the Manicheans rejected the Acts of the Apostles; the account of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost completely destroys the pretensions of Mani to be the promised Paraclete, or Comforter.

GEBAIL, THE ANCIENT BYBLUS

(WALPOLE: *The Ansayrii*, vol. iii, pp. 26–28.)

THE Moslem town of Gebail is situated on a spur of the Lebanon that runs here down to the sea, walled on three sides, the surface alone being opened. The walls are patched with modern ill-built repairs, defended, at certain distances, by plain, square towers. On one of these, the newest one, there is a rose, carved in stone, but it seems rather added than made for the building. Gebail is an ancient, and has been an important town. It is mentioned (Joshua xiii. 5) as the sea boundary on the north of the land the Lord would give unto Israel. It furnished workmen to Hiram in his preparation of the materials for King Solomon's Temple; it furnished caulkers to the Syrians. If it is the Byblus of the ancients, and the text quoted above would lead one to suppose so, it was the birthplace of Adonis—that loved one of the queen of love. Here his father had a stately palace, and the city afterwards became famous for the worship of Adonis, and the temples it raised to his honour.

ANTIQUITY OF SIDON

FEW cities lay claim to greater antiquity than Sidon. It is supposed to have been founded by Sidon, the eldest son of Canaan; and, if this be the case, it is now nigh upon four thousand years old. A Phœnician colony afterwards existed at Sidon; and after the subversion of the Greek empire Sidon fell into the hands of the Romans, who deprived it of its freedom to punish the citizens for their frequent revolts.

From this date Sidon fell successively under the Saracen, Seljukian, Turkish, and Egyptian Sultans, till at the date above recorded the last act of spoliation was committed; and in 1841 Sidon, in common with Syria and Palestine, again fell under the sway of the Ottoman empire, after having been ruled by Ibraham Pasha for a few brief years.

RUINS NEAR MARAH, WITH MASONS' MARKS

(Walpole: *The Ansayrii*, vol. i. p. 192.)

"About one and a half hours south-west of Marah, I visited some heaps of ruins, standing on the breast of a hill. Several walls, of large massive stones, well built, were still standing; and the whole hill, for two miles or more one way, and certainly five or six in circumference, was literally deep in stones squared for building, and fallen columns. To the south remained one corner of a wall, some forty feet high, built of stones five feet long by three thick, broad, and uncemented. I found the *subscribed sign*, which I copied (this author is always mysteriously reserved in any Masonic allusions). In another portion is a wall, and spring of an arch, which, in its style and workmanship, reminded me of Baalbec. At the corner is a small pilaster on the wall, more Corinthian than anything else, but richly ornamented. The whole bears a striking resemblance to the gate of the famous temple at Baalbec, and I cannot but think the same hands built both."

ANCIENT OLIVE GROVES OF SYRIA

(Urquhart: *History of the Lebanon*, vol. ii. p. 85.)

The olive groves of Athens were in their vigour in the time of Pericles, and are a fine middle-aged grove to-day. The grove south of Tripoli has every tree in its place, and it is 1,100 years old. The proportion of timber to foliage is excessive; as the tree becomes old the trunk extends, assuming distorted forms, and opens into fretwork; the branches break off, so that they come, when very decrepid, to look like a piece of ruin, with some shrubs on the top. This is the character of the trees scattered over this plain, which, therefore, were in full vigour when Abraham crossed the Euphrates. At the time of the building of the Pyramids this whole country was planting, or had been planted, with olives in rows.

AQUEDUCT OF SEMIRAMIS, AND ANCIENT ORDERS OF ARCHITECTURE

(Urquhart: *History of the Lebanon*, vol. ii. p. 210.)

Along the path were scattered blocks of stone, pierced as a water pipe, and grooved deeply, so as to fit into one another. They formed a duct to bring water to Deir el-Kaalah along the ridge, which, however, rises considerably, so that there can be no doubt that, at the time

of its construction, they understood the principle of the ascent of confined liquids. To see if any memory of its epoch was preserved, I inquired by whom it had been made, and was answered " by *Siti Simrit*." Nearly two thousand years ago Strabo was told that the mounds, water conduits, and " stairs of the mountains " were the works of Semiramis.

In the ruins of Deir el-Kaalah three trunks of large columns stand, and the lower layers of the cella of a temple, in very large blocks. Several Greek inscriptions show the Divinity to have been a Phœnician, one unknown before, Baal Markios, or Baal the Dancer. A second temple has smaller columns, *with Etruscan* capitals. Mr. Berton found a piece of *an Ionic* capital, of archaic form, and has fortunately given a picture of it, which exactly corresponds with one in the Palace of Nimroud, in a bas-relief, representing the attack of a maritime people, which Mr. Layard supposes to be Tyre. Over a window I saw an Ionic volute. The Doric, the first Order of Greece, has been found at Beni Hassan, 1,400 years older than Pericles. Now I behold the Etruscan, the original Order of Italy, in the land from which, through Lydia, we must derive that people.

THE MYTH OF THE PHŒNIX

Ovid represents Pythagoras as adducing the story of the Phœnix by way of exemplifying the perpetual destruction and reproduction of the world ; and in point of application there is reason to believe that the Mythos originated from this very doctrine. Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians have a sacred bird called the Phœnix, which he never saw except in a picture. Its form, according to the delineation of it, was that of an eagle ; and its wings were of the blended colour of gold and ruby. It was wont to make its appearance only once at the end of six hundred years, and that upon the death of the parent bird. The Heliopolitans asserted that whenever that event took place it came from Arabia to the Temple of the Sun, bearing the dead body of its parent enclosed in a ball of myrrh, which it prepared in the following manner. First it made a ball shaped like an egg, of such a size as it found itself, by trial, able to carry. Next it hollowed out the ball and introduced the body of the dead bird into the excavation. Lastly, it closed the aperture with myrrh, and, the ball being thus made of the same weight as it originally was, it carried it to the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis. In several of these particulars Ovid agrees with Herodotus, and he further informs us that the Phœnix possessed the power of self-reproduction, which peculiarity fitted it to be the type of the world. When its long life of six centuries was drawing to a close, it prepared for itself an aromatic nest in the branches of an oak, or on the summit of a palm-tree. Its work being finished, it placed itself upon it and ended its life in the midst of sweet odours. From the body of the deceased bird soon sprang a young Phœnix, destined to live through the same long period as its parent

had done before it. With pious care it hovered near the nest which had given it birth ; and as soon as its strength was equal to the task it bore away that which had been equally its own cradle and the tomb of its parent, and deposited it before the gates of the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis. Nonnus extends the life of the Phœnix to a thousand years, and alludes to the familiar story, which is not mentioned by either Ovid or Herodotus, of the parent bird burning itself upon the odoriferous pile which it had carefully prepared, and of a young Phœnix springing to life from the ashes of its parent. Amongst the Chaldeans it was known as *Clo*, the letters of which word made up the number 600, as they did in the Phœnician, Greek, and Coptic languages. In Egypt the word Pthas, which in Greek numerals also stood for 600, denoted Thoth, or Hermes, under the symbol of the *crux ansata*, and a lake bearing that name, near one of the temples in Mount Lebanon, in honour of Venus, according to Zosimus, artificially formed in the shape of a star, at regular period showed a burning light of globular form. The Phœnix seems often confounded with the Peacock, another sacred bird of the ancients, and also with the raven, also reverenced by them. Mrs. Atwood, the learned authoress of *A Suggestive Inquiry*, connects the myth of the Phœnix with the land of Phœnicia, and the rising again from the ashes as symbolizing the smelting carried on in that country, where, by the assistance of the fire, metal obtained new life and purity.

WORSHIP OF THE PEACOCK

Various writers connect the worship of the peacock with that of the mythical Phœnix, and the description of the plumage of the latter bird would in many respects favour this assumption. Faber says that it is not improbable that the Sema-Rama of the Assyrians, when complete, exhibited the appearance of a woman bearing on her head a dove, surrounded by the rainbow—" at least I think it abundantly clear that the peacock was consecrated to the Queen of the Gods, because, in its gaudy plumage, it exhibits the various tints of the rainbow." According to this idea, the peacock would be a symbolical representation of the dove, or Holy Spirit, resplendent with all the glory of the rainbow. In the religion of the Hindus, Parvati, the consort of Siva, is usually depicted as accompanied by her son, Cartikeya, the commander of the celestial armies, and in many respects typifying the Messiah, who rides upon a peacock. For this reason probably the Emperor of China, according to early writers, while assuming to himself a full share of divinity, caused himself to be carried on a peacock, " made with much ingenuity," when appearing in public. In Sanscrit, the word Salivahna used to describe the Messiah, means " The rider on a winged horse." The favourite bird of Juno, the peacock was called in Greek *Taos*, which is also a pure Chinese word. Accordingly to Kenealy, it is derived from the divine name, AO, and TAO, the Holy Spirit and God of the Chinese, having

thus the sacred Tau prefixed, and the S, the monogram of the Saviour, affixed to it. Argos, who was said in the fable to have been changed into the peacock, means Son of the Holy Spirit, so-called from Argha, her mystic name. And the bird itself, by its varied colours, and burnished splendour, was a symbol of the mystic Phœnix, another name for the Messiah, and said by Sir W. Drummond to represent Enoch, with the old Egyptian definite article, Pi, prefixed. The Phœnix resembled an eagle, which, in casting away its old feathers, and acquiring new ones, presents us with a lively image of renovation, and is therefore a well-known ecclesiastical symbolical figure.

THE TRIQUETRA AND PENTALPHA

(Urquhart : *History of the Lebanon,* vol. ii, p. 48.)

The forenoon was occupied in a learned discussion with the Jesuit missionaries, which arose out of the figure of the " Triquetra " on a saddle-cloth. They were vexed at these indications of antiquity, but found it not very easy to dispose of them. Why the Catholics should seek to shut their eyes against the evidences of a high descent for their co-religionaries, the Maronites, is incomprehensible, except that, making war on usages, they dislike them. On the present occasion we did not travel beyond ornaments. The Triquetra had been suggested by presenting itself. I instanced its use as an emblem in Pamphylia, in Sicily, and in the Isle of Man ; in each being a national blazon, but without traditionary explanation, or social use. Here it is in the usage of the people, but solely in reference to horses. So that it is here more primitive than it could have been among the races who have left its record two thousand years ago in Asia Minor, or in Sicilly, or who preserve it to this day in an English island. Being connected with the horse, there may be an association with the horse tribes of the East : it is found among the Tartars. The ornament is, moreover, always worked in felt, which is the earliest species of clothing, and which is also connected with the horse.

But this ornament does not stand alone. There is the " Seal of Solomon," or Pentalpha, five triangles interwoven, that mystic symbol of the Jews which to-day adorns the houses in Morocco as well as in the Lebanon. The " Open Hand " is equally stamped on the buildings in the two countries. This sign can have nothing to do with the Arabs. The number five is so offensive to them that they will not utter it, because it is associated with the hand. It is not only that there are these three ornaments, but that they are, if not the exclusive, the predominating ones, and that, being associated with numbers, they have a mystic and religious sense. The Triquetra is the number Three, the Trinity, whether of the Godhead or man's nature, and so belongs to the earliest religions. It is worn to this day by the horse tribes, the descendants of the followers of Oguz Khan, the conquerors of China and India, probably also of Asia Minor and Egypt, and the professors of the religion of Japhet. The Pentalpha and the hand are severally connected with the number five,

and therefore with the great Indian Buddhist Reformation, of which five was the number of predilection, although the Cross was the symbol.

In the *Arabian Nights* the Seal of Solomon is constantly introduced, showing the traditions of that work not to have been Arab; indeed, what is there in Arabia that is not plagiarism? Their conversion to Islam had taken off the edge of the Sabean antipathy to the sign.

. . . In passing by the walls of Gebail, which are made up of old stones and fragments of columns and carved stones, I observed a singular combination of the numbers three and five; it was the Seal of Solomon with a trefoil at each angle. One of these ancient blocks so employed has the figure of the coins of Byblus, which is a representation of its temple.

. . . About two hours from Tripoli I saw, near the road, some felt-covered tents of a very mean description, belonging to a poor gipsy-looking tribe, the remnants of a tribe of Turcoman. Again the Triquetra!

THE SANCTITY OF THE TREFOIL

(Hislop: *The Two Babylons*, p. 185. London, 1860.)

The "falling of the crown from the head of Osiris" was specially commemorated in Egypt. That crown at different times was represented in different ways, but in the most famous myth of Osiris it was represented as a "Melilot Garland." Melilot is a species of trefoil; and trefoil in the Pagan system was one of the emblems of the Trinity. This clover leaf was evidently a symbol of high import among the ancient Persians; for thus we find Herodotus referring to it in describing the rites of the Persian Magi: "If any Persian intends to offer to a god, he leads the animal to a consecrated spot. Then, dividing the victim into parts, he boils the flesh, and lays it upon the most tender herbs, especially trefoil. This done, a magus—without a magus no sacrifice can be performed—sings a sacred hymn" (*Historia*, lib. I, cap. 132, pp. 62, 63). In Greece the clover, or trefoil, in some form or other, had also occupied an important place; for the rod of Mercury, the conductor of souls, to which such potency was ascribed, was called "Rabdos Tripetelos," or *the three-leaved rod.* Among the British Druids the white clover leaf was held in high esteem as an emblem of their Triune God, and was borrowed from the same Babylonian source as the rest of their religion.

Hislop does not allude to the Irish shamrock, as one would have expected, for which at the present day trefoil is so often sold as a substitute to the unwary, or more probably he is alluding to it under the name of trefoil, when speaking of the use of it by the Druids.

EASTERN IDEAS OF PARADISE

(Taylor's *History of Mohammedanism*, p. 117.)

The geography of paradise was a favourite subject with the early monks in the Eastern churches; the Magians and the Rabbins had

also their speculations on this curious topic, in which they showed the most monstrous ignorance, not merely of the earth's shape, but even of the geographical information common in their age and country. The Byzantine Syncellus gives us the following summary of the prevailing theory respecting paradise and the earth; it is the same as that recognized in the Koran:—

The sacred Scripture says: "He expelled Adam, and placed him opposite the Paradise of Delight"; but Babylonia, and all our earth is at a great distance from Eden, which lies in the Eastern clime, where we place paradise. And that we should quote an inspired evidence for this assertion, let us summon as a witness the divine Ephraim (Ephrem Syrus), that tongue rolling an ocean of eloquence, who, in his dogmatic orations, speaks thus of paradise: "Paradise is higher than all the lofty pleasant places of the earth; the waters of the deluge only reached its foundations. But the men older than the deluge dwelt between the ocean and paradise; the offspring of Cain, indeed, inhabited the land of Nod, which signifies 'tremulous'; the sons of Seth dwelt on the higher grounds in obedience to the command of Adam, that they should not mix with the offspring of the fratricidal Cain. The descendants of Cain were of low stature, on account of the curse pronounced upon their progenitor, but the children of Seth were giants, and like the angels of God in the upper regions. But the daughters of Cain, going to them with various musical instruments, brought them down from the upper regions and married them; contempt of the law consequently increasing, the deluge arose. And God brought Noah's ark (across the ocean) to Mount Ararat, and thenceforward, men dwelt on the earth. From whence it is evident that the earth now cultivated was then deserted, for by the mercy of God men dwelt before the deluge in regions near paradise, between paradise and the ocean. But the outward darkness, of which Christ spoke, lies beyond paradise. For paradise, with the ocean, goes all round the earth. Eden is on the eastern side, and the two lights of the sun and moon rise within paradise, and, having traversed it, set outside." The classical scholar will at once recognize the almost perfect identity between this and the geographical system adopted by Homer; and those acquainted with Indian literature will see that this account of paradise is exactly the same as that of Mount Meru, in the Hindu mythology.

NAMES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SEVEN ARCHANGELS

(Charles: *Book of Enoch*, xx.)

And these are the names of the holy angels who watch. Uriel, one of the holy angels, who is over the world and over Tartarus. Raphael, one of the holy angels, who is over the spirits of men. Raguel, one of the holy angels, who takes vengeance on the world of luminaries. Michael, one of the holy angels, to wit, he that is set over the best part of mankind and over chaos. Saraqael, one of the holy angels,

who is set over the spirits, who sin in the spirit. Gabriel, one of the holy angels, who is over paradise, and the serpents and the Cherubim. Remiel, one of the holy angels, whom God sets over those who rise.

ORIGIN OF THE KORAN

(CONDER : *Syrian Stone-lore*, p. 335.)

THE more we examine the Koran, the more we must see how little there is in it that was original, or unknown before Mohammed ; and when we turn to the Moslem heresies, which date back to the establishment of the power of the Caliphs in Persia, we find the same elements —Gnostic, Christian, Greek, Jewish, Indian, and Mazdian—lying at their roots. It is impossible in these pages to follow to its full extent this comparison of Islam with the older religions of Western Asia, but a glance may be given at some of the evidence, which is sufficiently copious to fill a volume by itself. The Koran, as it now exists, is not older than A.D. 652, or twenty years after the death of the Prophet, when the authorized version was published. In A.D. 634, Zeid, the secretary of Mohammed, collected the scattered Suras, some at least of which had never been written down. Considering how late is the literary evidence as to the history of the Koran, and how great is the difference between the wild poetic outbursts of the earlier Mecca poems of Mohammed, and the argumentative and legal provisions of the later Suras of Medina, it would be rash to affirm that all the Koran is attributed to Mohammed, and that no additions or alterations were made by his successors.

CREATION OF THE KORAN

(TAYLOR'S *History of Mohammedanism*, p. 104.)

WHETHER the Koran was created or eternal, continues to be still a fierce subject of contention among the Mohammedan theologians : for asserting the former opinion the Caliph Vathek was stigmatized as an infidel, and sentenced to unenviable immortality, both in the East and West, as the worst of tyrants and sinners. Abou Yacoub relates a curious account of a public controversy on the subject between Shafai, the poet and theologian, and Hafs, a sectarian preacher at Baghdad. Hafs asserted that the Koran was created at the moment of its revelation. Shafai quoted the verse, " God said *be*, and it was," and asked, " Did not God create all things by the word *be ?* " Hafs assented. " If then, the Koran was created, must not the word *be* have been created with it ? " Hafs could not deny so plain a proposition. " Then," said Shafai, " all things, according to you, were created by a created being, which is a gross inconsistency and manifest impiety." Hafs was reduced to silence, and such an effect had Shafai's logic on the audience, that they put Hafs to death as a pestilent heretic.

Shafai was the founder of one of the four orthodox sects, and was

so celebrated by the Sunnites that his presence was said to be "like the sun to the world, or health to the body."

ORIGIN OF THE SWASTIKA

(Hewitt : *Primitive Traditional History*, vol. i, p. 119.)

The Solstitial Year of the ancient races of South-eastern Asia was represented in archaic symbolism by the St. Andrew's Cross, with its its N.W., N.E., S.E., and S.W. corners depicting the flight of the cloud-bird in its annual flights. This, which was the centre sign of the later eight-rayed star, is the first form of the first Swastika, called female in India, in which the arms turn to the left, the annual flight of the sun-bird Su (Su-Astika, or Ashtika, the god of the New Year) round the heavens, going first northward at the winter solstice, returning southwards at midsummer, and moving in its circuit contrary to the course of the sun. It is more universally found distributed amongst all ancient nations in its right-hand form, as following the circuit of the sun, known as the male Swastika, but the female symbol is found in China, and among the Bompos of Tibet. The religion of the flying bird circling the heavens, originally the cloud-bird driven by the wind, was that of the maritime races, so consequently it is near the sea that the Su-vastika symbol is most frequently found. On a sculpture in an ancient Mexican temple the Yucatan god, *Copan cum-ahau*, Lord of the bowl, is depicted like the Indian elephant-headed god *Gan-isha*, Lord of the land, seated on the two united Su-astikas, the male and the female, combined to form a square, with his legs crossed in the form of a St. Andrew's Cross, thus representing the solstitial sun in both winter and summer solstices. It must have been the Turanians, in their antedeluvian wanderings, who took this symbol from Asia to the Algonquin Indians of North America, and the Mexican and South American races as the universal symbol of the revolving sun.

Another form of the ancient Hindu Swastika is the Fylfot Cross, sometimes called Thor's Hammer ; it was also employed as an emblem by the Buddhists. By certain early Christians it was known as "Tetragammaton," the unspeakable name of the Deity, as represented by the four "Gammas," the Greek "G," which go to make up the Swastika, themselves a quarter of the perfect square, an emblem of the Perfect Deity from the earliest ages, as the triangle has always been of the Trinity. The Swastika is found in Assyria, at Troy, in the Catacombs of Rome, on the ruins of South Africa, Mexico, and South America ; on old Greek coins and Etruscan vases ; on the rocks of Cornwall, as well as on bells in the Norse settlements in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. It is the Croix Cramponnée, and also an Indian caste-mark.

CIRCUMAMBULATING THE LODGE

(Simpson : *The Jonah Legend*, p. 18. London, 1899.)

With the Semites there is one example which appears to be a good illustration of the principle. The pilgrims of Mecca perform what

is considered to be a very sacred part of the ceremonies; that is, the *tawuf*, or circumambulation of the Kaabah. The reason given for this is, that the first Kaabah was an imitation of the celestial throne which is constantly being circumambulated by the angels. Going round sacred places and things is not peculiar to the Semites: it is a ritualistic custom that can be traced through most parts of the ancient world, and in many cases it is continued down to our own times. Being part of the ritual at the Kaabah, it is not difficult to understand how it gave birth to the mythos of the angels and the throne.

CIRCUIT WITH THE SUN, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

(HEWITT: *Primitive Traditional History.*)

IN ancient astronomical astronomy it was believed that the retrograde left-hand circuits of the Great Bear round the Pole accurately represented the circular tracks of the sun and moon through the stars. Apparently the belief in the sun-wise motion of the sun, which is marked in ritual by the adoption of the sun-wise circles used in the age of the last Vedic worship, only began to be widely entertained after the last Vedic year of twelve thirty-day months, each of three ten-day weeks, was substituted for the eighteen-months year, for in Mexico, where it existed later, all processions proceeded to the left-hand still (this idea prevailed also in one form of the Swastika, as mentioned in the paragraph under that heading). A sect in Thibet, the Bombos, or black-hat sect, who hold a special New Year's festival on the 15th August, make their circuits round their sacred buildings from right to left, contrary therefore to the course of the sun, as prescribed by the regular Buddhists. In the ritual of the Brahmana Pitriyajna worship of the dead the priests make six circuits of the altar, the first three retrograde from right to left, contrary to the course of the sun, and the other three sun-wise, from left to right. During these services the sacrificial cord is worn by the priests on the right shoulder, and it is only moved to the left shoulder, on which it is worn by all Vedic Brahmans, when they make their butter-offerings, and resume the sun-wise circuits. Thus, in these rites, the worship of Pole Star, Sun and Moon are intermingled, marking the sacrifice as one of the age of transition from the primeval stellar lunar worship to that of the rising sun of day which succeeded the setting sun of night.

THE THREE STEPS OF VISHNU

THE Hindus have a tradition that when Brahm, the Almighty Father, determined to create the world in which we live he entrusted the task to Vishnu, the avatar, represented as a dwarfish being to symbolize his inferiority to the Supreme Deity. Vishnu having completed the task of creation in six days, Brahm was so pleased that he promised Vishnu dominion over as much of his creation as he could compass

in three steps. Thereupon Vishnu, taking a step to the left, passed right over the earth : with another step to the right he encompassed the sea ; with a third, straight in front of him, he included the heavens also, so claiming, and obtaining, dominion over all that he had created. Master Masons may reflect whether this has any claims to consideration in determining the source of our ritual.

ORIENTATION OF LODGES

(Oliver : *Antiquities of Freemasonry.*)

Masons assign three reasons for placing their Lodges due east and west, where possible, or for at least preserving an imputed Orientation : the rising and setting of the sun, the propagation of learning and science, and the disposition of the Tabernacle of Moses, and its later counterpart, the Temple of Solomon. The spread of Christianity, as of Masonry, began in the East, and thus Christians, like Mohammedans, face the east in their worship. The Koran (chap. 2) says : "Every sect hath a certain tract of heaven to which they turn themselves in prayer ; wherever ye be, God will bring you all luck at the resurrection, for God is Almighty. And from what place soever thou camest forth, turn thy face towards the holy temple ; for this is truth from thy Lord ; neither is God regardless of that which ye do ; and, wherever ye be, turn your face towards the holy temple, lest men have matter of dispute against you." The Persians, in commencing their adorations in the early part of the day, always worshipped towards the east, and Daniel, as we know, observed this practice. The ancient Jews were particular in following the course of the sun in passing round the altar in the course of their devotions. The Druids had the slope of their cromlechs, or stone altars, erected in their vast roofless temple stretching from earth to heaven unfettered, turned towards the east, where they might catch, along the full extent of its inclined surface, the first glimpse of the sun. The same custom, we know, prevailed among the pre-historic races of South Africa, and of Central and South America. All, therefore, point to one common source of all religious rites, and the habit of regarding the sun as the most glorious symbol of the majesty of the Almighty Father.

MASONIC TRACING BOARDS AND ANCIENT CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

(Anon. : *The Canon*, pp. 294 ff. London, 1897.)

The east end of the Gothic churches was built in the form of a Tau cross, the western half of the church being of a long rectangular shape, resembling Noah's Ark, which is probably connected with the name, ship, or nave, given to this part of the building. Therefore the east end of the church exhibits the symbol of the Macrocosm, or Father, who is the antithesis of the Bride, allocated to the west. The choir, between the two, figuratively contained the seven circles of the planets,

with the body of Christ in the midst of them. (This has been mentioned earlier in the work quoted from.) That this threefold arrangement of the Christian churches agrees with the pattern of a Masonic Lodge may be shown from an examination of an old "Tracing Board," preserved at Freemasons' Hall.

In the working of a Masonic degree the symbolical Lodge is not the room in which the ceremony is performed, but the emblematical design painted upon the tracing board, which is laid upon the floor. As the initiate advances the Lodge changes its character and in every degree he finds a new board before him, the symbolic devices upon it being appropriate to each step in the ritual. The particular specimen before us is not more than a hundred years old, but it was probably designed according to a traditional plan handed down from remote times. On one side it shows a Lodge of the first and second degrees, and on the other that of the third degree. The proportion of this board is very nearly in the ratio of 3 : 1, that is to say, it is composed of three squares laid in a row, and is consequently of the same proportions as the floor of the tabernacle.

The events enacted in the Masonic ritual are, of course, supposed to take place at the building of King Solomon's Temple, and in the first degree the Apprentice enters into the porch, which is symbolized on the Lodge board by the two pillars, with a doorway between them. It has been said that the Temple of Solomon is figuratively set forth in every church, and if, as we have supposed, the temple followed the pattern of the Kabalistic diagram, then the Apprentice, being brought into the porch, which has been identified with the tenth step, must symbolically ascend from the earth to the highest heaven. At first the candidate sees only one portion of the board, for he is admitted no further than the porch or sublunary world.

In the next degree, as a Fellow Craft, he enters into the Holy Place of the Temple, when, the next portion of the tracing board being unfolded, he sees a "point within a circle" bounded by two parallel lines denoting the universe, the ladder expressing the intervals between the planetary orbits, and the sun, moon, and seven stars completing the number of the heavenly bodies. It has already been shown that the six steps, intermediate between the tenth and the third, were referred by Kabalists to the Logos, or the Second Person in the Triad. Accordingly the Fellow Craft sees in these emblems on the floor a figure of the Microcosm, whose body occupies the region between the moon and the zodiac. The choir in the middle of a church corresponds to the Fellow Craft's tracing board.

For the third degree the tracing board is turned over, and the candidate is confronted with the half-open coffin. He has passed through the elements as an embryo, traversed the planetary orbits as a man, and now, having left the material world behind, he enters the Empyreum, or three hypothetical circles which surround the zodiac. The Holy of Holies of the Temple was supposed to symbolize this region, corresponding to the three upper steps of the Kabala

under the name of the Macrocosm, or Father. So the initiate now personates Father Hiram, the Master Builder of King Solomon, whose spirit in death ascends to the spheres of heaven, which the ancients supposed to be the dwelling-place of souls. Thus the Masonic ritual epitomises, in its three stages, the whole compass of existence, both cosmic and human. The Apprentice personates the man in his embryonic or antenatal period ; the Fellow Craft represents him in the flesh, while the Master's death allegorically signifies the transmission of the soul to the starry fluid of the Empyreum, from which it re-issues into a new sphere of life, in another incarnation. The fitness of the altar approached by its three steps, for celebrating the mystical rite of the Eucharist, or the passing of the spirit to its new body, will now be apparent.

It is inadvisable to discuss the Masonic legend further here, but all who are truly initiated know that the import of Hiram's death is exactly analogous to that of Christ, and that the third degree is symbolically similar to the Eucharistic rite, which in the Early Church was enacted with the same secrecy and mystery as is still observed in the Raising of a Master Mason.

RELIGIOUS WORK OF THE ANCIENT FREEMASONS

(ANON. : *The Canon*, p. 184. London, 1897.)

AMONGST other changes at the beginning of the sixteenth century, coincident with the decay of so much else, we notice at this time the gradual disappearance of the old Order of practical Freemasons, and a corresponding decline in all the architectural arts. The change of religious opinions affecting the whole basis of theology, necessarily extended to the design of the churches, entrusted during the Middle Ages to the Freemasons, who had worked according to the ancient rules, received in continuity from their predecessors, who had worshipped the older gods of earlier systems, whose rites still survived and accorded with the primitive Christianity of the mediæval Church.

It was when this old conception of religion began to be superseded at the Reformation that the need for a body of architects instructed in theological mysteries no longer acknowledged, ceased to exist, and the secret methods of all previous temple-builders, left in the hands of the Freemasons, fell into disuse and were gradually forgotten.

Out of the records of the modern Lodges, and other collateral sources, it is possible to derive a clue to the mysterious rules which constituted the canonical method of building churches, according to ecclesiastical use and practice. It is an unquestionable fact that there was a canonical art of building, just as there was a canon of the Mass, canonical books, canonical robes, canonical hours, canons of chronology, and canonized saints. All these canonical forms appear to depend upon one fundamental mystery. The geometrical figure which appears to have formed the basis of most mediæval churches is the Rhombus, or Vesica. Speaking of the secret rites at Eleusis,

Hippolytus tells us that the mystery of the Greeks was called " Eleusin " and " Anactorion." " Eleusin," because we who are spiritual come flowing down from Adam above: for the word " Eleusesthi " is of the same import with the words " to come." But " Anactorion " is of the same import with the expression " to ascend upwards " (Revelation v. 3). This also was the mystery of the Christian Church, and every cathedral symbolized, by its plan, those two mysterious factors of existence. By the Cross they symbolized " Eleusin," and by the Rhombus " Anactorion."

THE PATRIARCHAL SOURCE OF FREEMASONRY

FREEMASONRY, says Dr. Oliver in his *Landmarks*, being a moral institution attached to every system of worshipping the true and only God, in Lodges which are intended to represent the structure of the world, and consequently directing the attention to a common Creator, Redeemer, and Judge, without any reference to peculiar creeds or tenets, it necessarily includes a view of that majestic scheme by which the Deity was graciously pleased to reveal himself personally to man —the Mosaic Dispensation. (Hutchinson terms the three Dispensations—the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian—the three stages of Masonry.) For it includes a survey of the Patriarchal mode of devotion, which indeed forms the primitive model of Freemasonry.

TRANSITION FROM ANCIENT TO MODERN INITIATIONS

(HECKETHORN: *Secret Societies*, vol. i. p. 137.)

AN order of facts now claims our attention which in a certain manner signalizes the transition from ancient to modern initiations. An extraordinary phenomenon in social conditions becomes apparent, so strikingly different from what we meet with in antiquity, as to present itself as a new starting-point. Hitherto we have seen the secret organizing itself in the higher social classes, so as to deprive the multitude of truths, whose revelation could not have taken place without injury and danger to the hierarchy. At the base we find polytheism, superstition; at the summit, deism, rationalism, the most abstract philosophy.

The secret societies of antiquity were theological, and theology frequently inculcated superstition; but in the deepest recesses of the sanctuary there was a place where it would laugh at itself and the deluded people, and draw to itself the intelligences that rebelled against the servitude of fear, by initiating them into the only creed worthy of a free man. To that theology, therefore, otherwise very learned and not cruel, and which promoted art and science, much may be forgiven, attributing perhaps not to base calculation, but to sincere conviction and thoughtful prudence, the dissimulation with which it concealed the treasures of truth and knowledge, that formed its power, glory, and, in a certain manner, its privileges.

KHONX-OM-PAX

These words, to which by many an unsolved mysterious meaning is attached, were used at the conclusion of the Eleusinian Mysteries to dismiss the initiated, and their signification is " The object of my most ardent desire is holy rest with God." They are from the ancient Sanscrit *Kansch, Aum, Paksch,* as they are used to this day by the Brahmins at the conclusion of their religious rites. They were also used in the Egyptian Mysteries, and in one ancient ritual in use in this country, to which an Egyptian origin is attributed, the meaning is given as " Light in Extension."

THREE STARS OF ORION'S BELT

(Hewitt: *Primitive Traditional History,* vol. i. p. 158.)

The three stars of Orion's belt, denoting the three seasons of the year of the arrow slaying the sun-god, appear again in the girdle of three strands of Munja grass, which every Brahmin, at his initiation, ties round his waist with three knots, saying, as he does so, that they represent the three stars on Orion's belt, the three seasons of the year; and these three stars are called, in Teutonic mythology, *Frigg-jar rockr,* the belt " of Frigga," wife of Wodan, the supreme god. This three-knotted girdle, called the *Kamberiah,* is worn by all sects of Dervishes in South-western Asia, who are the modern representatives of the ancient dancing-priests, such as the *Kouretes* and *Daktuloi,* the priests of the five fingers, who nursed and danced round the infant Zeus, the Cretan god Tan, as the village women of the Matriarchal age danced round the maypole, the mother-tree.

SYRIAN USE OF TOBACCO

(Walpole: *The Ansayrii,* vol. i. p. 232.)

" With the legendary descriptions of how tobacco first came into use in the East, through the example and advice of an extremely holy recluse, we can hardly suppose that it was imported hither from America! In making inquiries on this subject while at Mosul, an old Arabic MS. was found, extending to over one hundred closely written pages, treating of the origin and use of tobacco, and of its good and evil propensities. The author, in his first chapter, says that Nimrod smoked. Poor Sir Walter Raleigh's claim fades before that of the mighty hunter, clad in the garments of Adam. If the curious reader will go to the British Museum he will see there an Assyrian cylinder, found at Mosul, and presented to the institution by Mr. Badger, whereon is represented a king smoking from a round vessel, to which is attached a long reed. We can hardly suppose that in the comparatively short space of time since the continent of America was discovered by us, it would have spread through Europe to the centre of Asia and its very utmost corners."

But considering the strong grounds for attributing to the inhabitants of the Syrian mountains the same parentage as the North and South American races, there need be small wonder at similar habits existing among them.

FAMA FRATERNITATIS: THE FOUNDING OF THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER

(WAITE: *Real History of the Rosicrucians*, pp. 64 ff., London, 1887.)

OUR Brother, C.R.C., the chief and original of our Fraternity, hath much and long time laboured, who, by reason of his poverty (although descended of noble parents), in the fifth year of his age, was placed in a cloyster, where he had learned indifferently the Greek and Latin tongues, and (upon his earnest desire and request), being yet in his growing years, was associated to a Brother, P.A.L., who had determined to go to the Holy Land. Although this Brother dyed in Ciprus, and so never came to Jerusalem, yet our Brother C.R.C. did not return, but shipped himself over, and went to Damasco, minding from thence to go to Jerusalem. But by reason of the feebleness of his body he remained still there, and by his skill in physics he obtained much favour with the Turks, and in the meantime he became acquainted with the Wise Men of Damcar in Arabia, and beheld what great wonders they wrought, and how Nature was discovered unto them.

Hereby was that high and noble spirit of Brother C.R.C. so stirred up, that Jerusalem was not so much now in his mind as Damascus;[1] also he could not bridle his desires any longer, but made a bargain with the Arabians that they should carry him for a certain sum of money to Damcar.

He was but of the age of sixteen years when he came hither, yet of a strong Dutch constitution. There the Wise Men received him, not as a stranger (as he himself witnesseth), but as one whom they had long expected; they called him by his name, and showed him other secrets out of his cloyster, whereat he could not but mightily wonder.

He learned there better the Arabian tongue, so that the year following he translated the book *M.* into good Latin, which he afterwards brought with him. This is the place where he did learn his Physick and his Mathematics, whereof the world hath much cause to rejoice, if there were more love and less envy.

After three years he returned again with good consent, shipped himself over *Sinus Arabicus* into Egypt, where he remained not long, but only took better notice there of the plants and creatures. He

[1] Waite says in a footnote: "Damascus and the unknown city denominated Damcar are continually confused in the German editions. Brother C.R.C. evidently did not project a journey to Damascus, which he had already reached; nevertheless this is the name appearing in this place, and I have decided on retaining it for reasons which will subsequently be made evident."

sailed over the whole Mediterranean Sea, for to come unto Fez, where the Arabians had directed him.

It is a great shame unto us that wise men, so far remote the one from the other, should not only be of one opinion, hating all contentious writings, but also be so willing and ready, under the seal of secrecy, to impart their secrets to others. Every year the Arabians and Africans do send one to another, inquiring one of another out of their arts, or if experience had weakened their reasons. Yearly there came something to light whereby Mathematics, Physic, and Magic (for in those are they of Fez most skilful) were amended. There is now-a-days no want of learned men in Germany, Magicians, Kabalists, Physicians, and Philosophers, were there but more love and kindness among them, or that the most part of them would not keep their secrets close only to themselves.

At Fez he did get acquaintance with those which are commonly called the Elementary inhabitants, who revealed unto him many of their secrets, as we Germans likewise might gather together many things if there were the like unity and desire of searching out secrets amongst us.

After two years Brother C.R. quitted the city Fez, and sailed with many costly things into Spain, hoping well, as he himself had so well and profitably spent his time in his travel, that the learned in Europe would highly rejoyce with him, and begin to rule and order all their studies according to those sure and sound foundations. He therefore conferred with the learned in Spain, showing unto them the errors of our arts, and how they might be corrected, and from whence they should gather the true *Inditia* of the times to come, and wherein they ought to agree with those things that are past; also how the faults of the Church and the whole *Philosophia Moralis* were to be amended. He showed them new growths, new fruits, and beasts, which did concord with old philosophy, and prescribed them new Axiomata, whereby all things might fully be restored. But it was to them a laughing matter, and being a new thing unto them, they feared that their great name should be lessened if they should now again begin to learn, and acknowledge their many years' errors, to which they were accustomed, and wherewith they had gained them enough.

So Brother C.R., after many painful travels, and his fruitless true instructions, returned again into Germany, the which he heartily loved, by reason of the alterations which were shortly to come, and of the strange and dangerous contentions. There, although he could have bragged with his art, but especially of the transmutations of metals, yet did he esteem more heaven, and man, the citizens thereof, than all vain glory and pomp.

Nevertheless, he builded a fitting and neat habitation (*Domus Sancti Spiritus*), in the which he ruminated his voyage and philosophy, and reduced them together in a true memorial. In this house he spent a great time in the mathematics, and made many fine instruments, *ex omnibus hujus artis partibus*, whereof there is but little remaining to us, as hereafter you shall understand.

KABALISM

(GOULD : *History of Freemasonry*, vol. ii. pp. 58, 59.)

"THE esoteric doctrine of the Kabalist (Kabala signifying 'to receive') is said in their tradition to have been derived from Adam, to whom, while in Paradise, it was communicated by the angel Rasiel, wherein may perhaps be traced the notion that Masonry is as old as Adam. This learning was bequeathed to Seth, and, having been nearly lost in the degenerate days that followed, was miraculously restored to Abraham, who committed it to writing in the book known as the *Sepher Yezirah.* The revelation was renewed to Moses, who received a traditionary and mystical as well as a written and preceptive Law from God, which, being again lost in the calamities of the Babylonish Captivity and once again delivered to Esdras was finally transmitted to posterity through the hands of Simeon-ben-Selath and others. When the sects of the Essenes and Therapeutæ were formed, foreign tenets and institutions were borrowed from the Egyptians and the Greeks and in the form of allegorical interpoliation of the Law were admitted into the Jewish Mysteries. These innovations were derived from the Alexandrian schools, where the Platonic and Pythagorean doctrines had already been much altered from being mixed with Orientalism. The Jewish Mysteries thus enlarged by the addition of heathen dogmas, were conveyed from Egypt to Palestine, when the Pharisees, who had been driven into Egypt under Hyrcanus, returned to their own country. From this time, the Kabalistic Mysteries continued to be taught in the Jewish schools, till at length they were adulterated in Peripatetic doctrines and other tenets which sprang up in the Middle Ages, and were particularly corrupted by the prevalence of the Aristotelian philosophy.

"The Kabala itself may be divided into three portions : the Theoretical, which treats of the highest order of metaphysics, that relating to the Divinity, and the relation of the Divinity to man ; the Enigmatical, consisting of certain symbolical transpositions of the words and letters of the Scriptures ; and the Practical, which professes to teach the art of curing diseases and performing other wonders by means of certain arrangements of secret letters and words."

THE TEMPLE AND THE CHURCH

(HECKETHORN : *Secret Societies*, vol. i. p. 117.)

THE very name of Knights Templar may, in a certain manner, point to a rebellious ambition. Temple is a more august, a vaster, and more comprehensive denomination than that of Church. The Temple is above the Church ; this latter has a date of its foundation, a local habitation ; the former has always existed. Churches fall ; the Temple remains as a symbol of the parentage of religions and the perpetuity of their spirit. The Templars might thus consider them-

selves as the priests of that religion, not transitory, but permanent; and the aspirants could believe that the Order constituting them the defenders of the Temple intended to initiate them into a second and better Christianity, a purer religion. Whilst the Temple meant for the Christian the Holy Sepulchre, it recalled to the Mussulman the Temple of Solomon; and the legend which referred to the latter served as a bond to the rituals of Freemasons and other secret societies. Further, the Church might be called the house of Christ; but the Temple was the house of the Holy Spirit. It was that religion of the spirit which the Templars inherited from the Manicheans, from the Albigenses, from the sectarian chivalry which had preceded them. The initiatory practices, the monuments, even the trial, showed this prevalence of the religion of the Spirit in the secret doctrines of the Templars. They drew a great portion of their sectarian and heterodox tendencies from that period in which chivalry, purified and organized, became a pilgrimage in search of the San Greäl, the mystic cup that received the blood of the Saviour; from that epoch in which the East, in invasions, armed and unarmed, with the science of the Arabs, with poesies and heresies, had turned upon the West.

MASONIC MEETING IN A MOSQUE

(London *Evening News*, September 3, 1918.)

FREEMASONS in Palestine have held a Masonic meeting on the historic site of King Solomon's Temple, where Freemasonry is supposed to have originated about 1000 B.C.

This meeting was organized by members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in Palestine. The Mosque of Omar being on the site of the Temple, the New Zealanders approached the Great Sheikh in charge of the mosque for permission.

Then occurred an incident showing the universality of the Order. The Sheikh listened to what the strangers had to say, and then to their amazement he asked if there were any Masons among them. The rest was easy.

He declared himself a Mason, and at the meeting he acted as one of the Guards of the Lodge.

The place within the mosque where the meeting was held is known as the "Cave of the Rock of the Dome," and is believed to have been the Holy of Holies of the old Temple, as it is to-day of the Mosque of Omar. Soldiers of all ranks were present, and after a Lodge had been duly constituted and opened resolutions were passed conveying fraternal greetings and good wishes to the various Grand Lodges, to the Lodges in New Zealand, and the brethren on service in France.



PRINCIPAL AUTHORS QUOTED



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